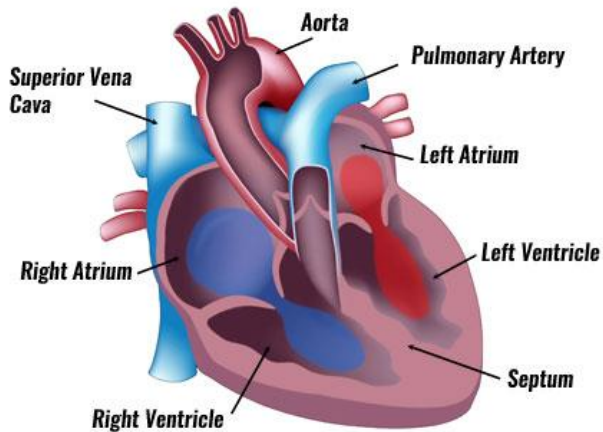


HEART DISEASE



HEART DISEASE

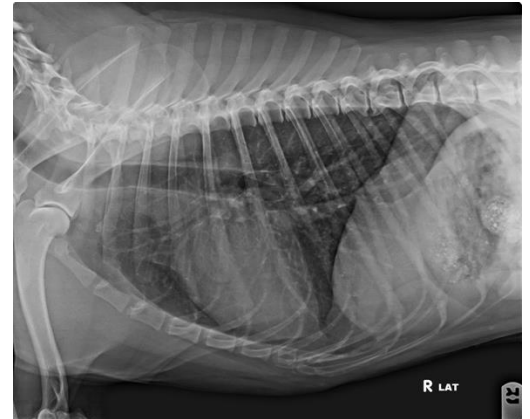
What is heart disease?

Heart disease is used to describe any abnormality of the heart. This can be a leaky valve, an abnormal beat, hole in the heart wall, distension of a chamber, or thickening of a chamber to name a few.

Pets are typically diagnosed with heart disease based on symptoms or physical exam. Diagnosis of heart disease is supported by symptoms such as increased respiratory rate/heavy breathing, exercise intolerance (they can't play as much as they used to), syncope (passing out), coughing, gagging/hacking, pot belly. On physical exams your veterinarian may be able to hear an abnormal rhythm or murmur.

Please visit <https://cvm.ncsu.edu/nc-state-vet-hospital/small-animal/cardiology> to learn more about this disease.

MURMUR • ARRHYTHMIA



QUESTIONS?

Please contact your veterinarian via email or phone.

Dr. Greg Lowe
glowe@rowananimalclinic.com

Dr. Rhod Lowe
rlowe@rowananimalclinic.com

Dr. Marilyn Duda
mduda@rowananimalclinic.com

Dr. Josh Sullivan
jsullivan@rowananimalclinic.com

Also check out this helpful link from our website
<https://www.rowananimalclinic.com/drugs--diseases--surgical-procedures.html>

What comes next?

Proper diagnosis of heart disease sometimes requires a battery of tests. These may include one or more of the following tests:

- Blood pressure – measured with a cuff much like your doctor uses
- ECG/Holter Monitor – measures the electrical potential sent to the heart, helps with diagnosis of arrhythmias among other things
- Radiographs (x-rays) – 2 views to visualize heart size, pulmonary edema (fluid), distended vessels, examine part of heart anatomy
- Echocardiogram – ultrasound of the heart
- Blood testing – Taurine levels, pro Bnp, heart-worm test

Understanding the exact cause of heart disease helps us tailor the treatment to be more specific to your pet's disease. There are multiple medications that can be used to manage the symptoms of heart disease.

Drugs used to manage heart disease may include:

- Furosemide/Spironolactone – helps remove fluid from the lungs
- Enalapril, Amlodipine – lowers blood pressure
- Digoxin – manages arrhythmias
- Vetmedin/Pimobendan – decrease the work load on the heart
- Clopidogrel/Plavix – prevents clotting
- Many others

What comes later?

Once the diagnosis has been made, treatment with multiple medication is very common. Initially tests will

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need to be repeated to ensure that your pet is properly managed. Testing will then be performed:

1. When new symptoms develop
2. As advised by the veterinarian
3. Annually along with an Annual Preventive Examination
4. Any time you notice a return of symptoms or your pet just doesn't feel well

NOTE: It is also advised that chest x-rays be taken every 6-12 months to monitor progression of the disease. As heart disease progresses treatment also changes.

What should you plan for?

Management of this disease usually includes twice daily medication and close monitoring. Budget for annual testing, exams, and the purchase of medications and/or supplements. We have all medications in stock or on our online store for your convenience.

Also plan for adjustment in treatment. Heart disease is generally a progressive disease. Our goals in treatment are to slow the advancement of the disease. The timeline of disease progression is variable but it is very possible for your pet to have a normal lifespan with proper testing and treatment.

What should you watch out for?

One of the most important things to watch for at home is breathing. Pets that begin to cough likely need testing and adjustment in medication. In addition to coughing, breathing while at rest is a great predictor of heart disease. This is called resting respiratory rate. Count how many breaths (in and out counts as 1) that your pet takes within 1 minute while completely asleep. Go the following link to learn more.

<http://www.yourdogsheart.com/tools-resources/Resting-Respiratory-Rate-App.html>

Typically, a rate of 15-30 breaths per minute is considered normal. If you notice a higher number schedule an appointment with your veterinarian.

NOTE

THERE ARE VETERINARY CARDIOLOGISTS THAT SPECIALIZE IN HEART DISEASES. THE TESTS LISTED ABOVE CAN BE REFERRED VIA INTERNET TO A SPECIALIST FOR INTERPRETATION AND RECOMMENDATION. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT A VETERINARY CARDIOLOGIST PLEASE CONTACT YOUR VETERINARIAN.