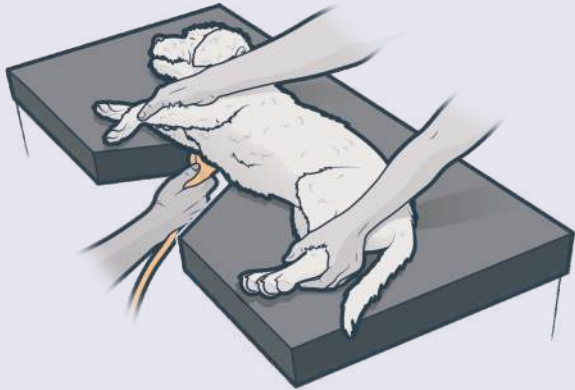


How is heart ultrasound performed?

There is no reason that you should be afraid about a heart ultrasound. It is completely painless. Your pet will need to lie on the side while remaining calm while the scan is being done. Some pets may need mild sedation in order to stay calm.

Fur on both sides of the pet's chest will be clipped for the procedure, while a gel is applied to the skin in order to get clear ultrasound images. The whole procedure usually takes less than 60 minutes and your pet will be closely monitored throughout.

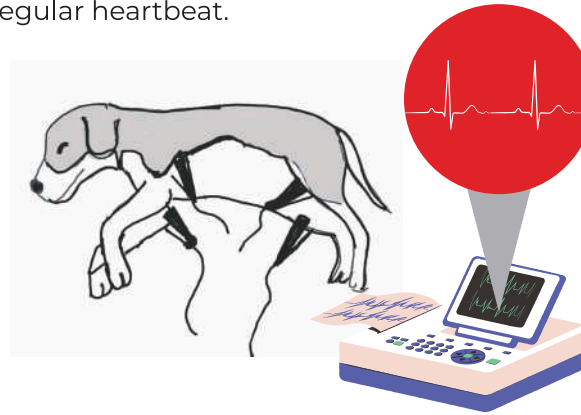


What is ECG?

Electrocardiogram or ECG allows an accurate determination of your pet's heart rate. An ECG can provide your vet with a variety of information about the dog's heart function such as:

- Is the heart rate normal?
- Is the heart rhythm normal?
- Does the dog's heart size appear to be normal?

A typical ECG consists of a pattern: a small bump that rises up and then a large spike upward, and then a smaller bump. Your vet will make sure the shape of the wave is correct, and also measure the distance between the various parts of the wave. For a regular heartbeat, the distance between the spikes will be identical. If the spikes are more frequent, infrequent or otherwise unidentical then your pet will have an irregular heartbeat.



Scan for taking the CHF Symptom Checker Test



This material is for informational purposes only. It does not replace the advice of a veterinarian. Talk to your vet, and visit www.savavet.com for more information.



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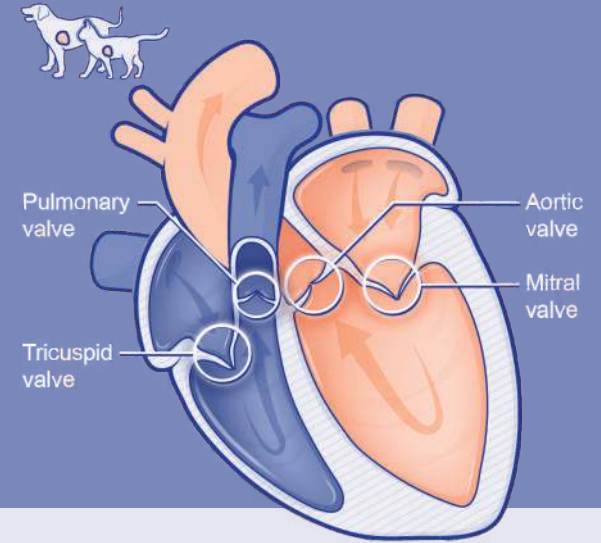
Sava House, Lalwani Plaza, Off New Airport Road, Sakore Nagar, Viman Nagar, Pune-411014, India.

+91 97644 43740

caring@savavet.com



Heart murmurs in dogs and cats



Your vet has detected a murmur in the heart of your pet. What now? It may have come as a surprise to you because there you have not noticed any symptoms - none at all. You are worried and concerned. But there is no need to panic.

A heart murmur is not a concern always. However, it has to be investigated further so that your vet can determine the reason for the murmur and make suitable recommendations.

What is heart murmur?

When your vet places his stethoscope on the heart of your pet, he may hear a **“whooshing” sound**. That is called heart murmur.



Veterinarian evaluating a cat

Heart murmurs can develop at any age; some pets may be born with a heart murmur. The incidence however is very low. Most of the pets will develop heart murmurs later in their lives. Since pets show symptoms when the condition is advanced, it is important that you get routine heart check-ups done for your pet.

Most of the heart murmurs are caused by underlying heart disease like:

Leaky heart valves, which do not close properly and hence allow a backward or blood flow in the wrong direction.

Narrow or “stenotic” heart valves which do not open properly and obstruct blood flow, causing the blood to flow faster through the obstruction

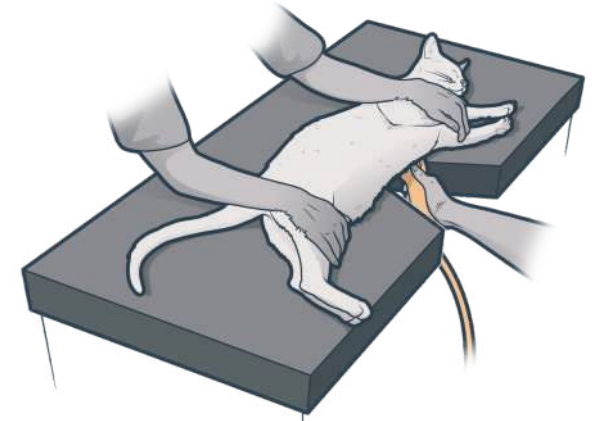
Congenital heart abnormalities, that your pet may have born with such as hole in the heart or an abnormal blood vessel.

In young puppies or kittens, an **“innocent flow murmur”** can be present. Such murmurs are very soft and tend to disappear by time they are six months old. Hence it is important to note that in a puppy or kitten, if the murmur is loud and does not go away by the age of 6 months, it is more likely due to an underlying heart disease. Some pets develop a heart murmur if they are unwell, because of conditions completely unrelated to the heart, like fever or if they become anemic.



How is diagnosis made?

The exact cause of a murmur is made by doing an echocardiography or ultrasound of the heart. The heart chambers and valves can be assessed in great detail and heart function can be measured. This will reveal if there is a heart disease, and if present how severe it is. This procedure will allow your vet to make important treatment decisions for your pet.



Based on the diagnosis and other co-morbid disease conditions, your vet may order for blood tests such as that to measure proBNP (a marker for heart disease). If proBNP levels are elevated, heart disease is likely and echocardiography is recommended. If proBNP level is normal, severe heart disease is less likely, though a milder form of the disease may be present.

Once a heart murmur is detected, an early diagnosis is always important as the correct treatment if started early can delay the progression of the heart disease and can possibly delay or prevent symptoms.