

When Your Pet Has a Heart Murmur...

What is a heart murmur?

- A heart murmur is an abnormal swishing noise in your pet's heart.
- Using a stethoscope, your primary care veterinarian determines if a heart murmur is present.
- The loudness of the murmur does not necessarily correlate with the severity of disease.

What does it mean for my pet?

- Most heart murmurs indicate underlying cardiac disease, the severity of which varies widely.
- A cardiac evaluation by a board certified veterinary cardiologist when the abnormal sounds are first noted provides the best care and outcome for your pet.
- Most pets seem fine on the outside until they develop severe heart disease because their instinct is to hide signs of the disease.
- All too often, pets end up in heart failure and the emergency room when early diagnosis and treatment could have resulted in a much longer and healthier life.
- Most cardiac disease in pets can be managed long term with medication. Surgery is rarely indicated.

How do I find out what is wrong with my pet?

- An echocardiogram (ultrasound of the heart) by a board certified veterinary cardiologist is the gold standard for definitive diagnosis.
- Veterinary cardiologists are experts in pet heart disease and have 4 years of training beyond veterinary college including a series of exams to become board certified.
- At CVCA, you are with your pet during the entire visit while we non-invasively diagnose your pet's condition and tailor the treatment specifically to your pet and family.

What is my veterinarian's role?

- Your primary care veterinarian is an integral part of your pet's cardiac care and receive a report of your pet's cardiac evaluation the same day your visit occurs.
- CVCA works together with you and your doctor to form a team to care for your pet.
- Our goals are to delay or prevent congestive heart failure thus avoiding stressful emergency room visits.
- After your visit, we are available to emergency and primary care veterinarians 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for assistance with patient care.

Final note:

- At CVCA, we are passionate about your pet's well being and the human-animal bond. Please visit our website at www.cvcavets.com or call us to obtain more information regarding heart diseases in pets and the services we provide.

