

At-Home Monitoring of the Heart Rate and Rhythm

Your pet's cardiologist may discuss options for at-home monitoring of your pet's heart rate/rhythm, which is best for patients who need frequent follow-up assessment of the heart rate/rhythm and/or have an elevated heart rate in the clinic (such as from being nervous/anxious) making it difficult to accurately evaluate them in the hospital. Options may include:

Monitoring of heart rate with a stethoscope:

Place the stethoscope just behind the left armpit region of your pet. A normal heartbeat has two sounds, a "lub" followed by a "dub" sound. This "lub dub" is one heartbeat. You can count the number of times that you hear this over 60 seconds to obtain a heart rate. Alternatively, you can count the number of heartbeats over 30 seconds and multiply by two. You may have to adjust the location of the stethoscope in order to best hear the heartbeats. Your cardiologist may also discuss with you if your pet's heart sounds are different in order for you to accurately count the number of heartbeats.

Monitoring of heart rate with a femoral pulse:

The femoral artery is located in the inguinal region (inside of the hip). By cupping your hand on the inside of the thigh just under the hip joint, a pulse may be able to be felt with the tips of your fingers. One pulsation felt under your fingers is equivalent to one heartbeat. You can count the number of times that you feel this over 60 seconds to obtain a heart rate. Alternatively you can count the number of femoral pulses over 30 seconds and multiply by 2.

KardiaMobile: An AliveCor KardiaMobile is an at-home arrhythmia monitoring device that can record an ECG strip and send data to your smart phone. Most of the time, the KardiaMobile works well on our patients and can provide accurate readings. You can purchase the device online which connects to a free app for your mobile device. First, part the fur just behind the left armpit of your pet at the place you can most easily feel the heartbeat. Apply a small amount of rubbing alcohol or ultrasound gel and then place the KardiaMobile device vertically to help obtain an ECG. This can then be downloaded to the app on your mobile phone which can then be forwarded to the CVCA team. Please consult with your CVCA team regarding how often and where to forward these recordings. Online videos are available describing this recording technique (such as YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7CQkr3Y55AQ>).