

Collaboration Between Primary Care Veterinarians and Board Certified Veterinary Cardiologists Leads To Longer, Healthier Lives for Pets

In most homes, pets are an important part of the family. Over the past few decades, the growing interest of health in our pets has led to an increase in the scope and quality of care in veterinary medicine. The demand for state of the art medicine, specialized care, and



24-hour emergency care access has revolutionized the extent to which we can ensure longer, healthier lives for our pets.

CVCA has published a study to determine the effect of the partnership between primary care veterinarians and in person board certified veterinary cardiologists on survival time of dogs after the onset of congestive heart failure (CHF). CHF occurs when heart disease is so severe that the cardiovascular system is no longer able to maintain its functions.

In this study, the medical records of canine patients suffering from congestive heart failure due to mitral valve disease were reviewed. The survival times of the patients who had been managed jointly by a primary care veterinarian and in person veterinary cardiologist were compared to the patients whose owners had elected not to see a cardiologist. The patients who were cared for by both the primary care veterinarian and cardiologist lived 75% longer than those who did not see a specialist.

As in human medicine, a board certified veterinary specialist such as a cardiologist is someone who has devoted years of additional training and testing to become experts in a particular body system or field. This allows for more accurate diagnosis

and proper intervention, which is especially critical with heart disease, which can go undetected in pets until advanced stages. Ongoing management of cardiac disease includes routine communication between the client, primary care veterinarian, and board certified

cardiologist and ensures the patient is receiving the best possible treatment plan to provide a long, happy life.

The relationship between the specialist and primary care practitioner, in veterinary medicine as in human medicine, is one of support and partnership in order to deliver optimal care and improve the survival times and quality of life of each patient. Collaboration and communication between the specialist, primary care veterinarian and family are of high importance in veterinary medicine and ensures the best quality of life for our best friends.

Provided complements of Bonnie K. Lefbom, DVM, DACVIM (Cardiology) & Neal K. Peckens, DVM, DACVIM (Cardiology). Impact of collaborative care on survival time for dogs with congestive heart failure... (JAVMA 2016/Vol 249 No. 1). CVCA has six convenient locations in Maryland. For more information, visit www.cvcavets.com or call your local office at 410-224-0039 (Annapolis), 443-583-3131 (Columbia) 240-457-4387 (Frederick), 240-361-3820 (GaitHERsburg), 301-984-5791 (Rockville) or 410-339-3461 (Towson). See our ad page 5.