We are so excited to expand our availability in the Austin market by adding our second location within Capital Area Veterinary Specialists (CAVS) and adding our third board-certified cardiologists, Dr. Julie Andrie. We know Dr. Andrie will be well received by the community as she was so loved in Northern Virginia during her three-year residency with CVCA.

Our entire team loves hearing from our clients on how our care has impacted their lives. We so appreciate the time our clients take to fill out our surveys, communicate with us on social media, and share photos and videos of their pets at home. It means so much to know all the hard work has such a positive impact on so many families.

We would love to hear from you too! What is working well, what can we do better, how can we help provide the best service to you and care to your clients and patients? Please visit our survey here to give us feedback or reach out to us anytime!

We are truly thankful for our network of amazing veterinarians!

Best,
Katie Newbold, CEO

Reducing Stress in Cats with Gabapentin

By: Tim Cain, DVM, Diplomate, ACVIM (Cardiology) seeing patients in CVCA Maryland locations.
owner is the mouse. Veterinarians have recognized this and have developed programs to make veterinary visits less stressful including Fear Free and Cat Friendly Practice certified programs.

At CVCA, our goal is to provide the highest level of care for our patients and their families. This often requires recheck evaluations to follow heart size and function, monitor response to medications and watch for progression of heart disease. Over the last 5 years, we have been more proactive about reducing stress for our feline patients including pheromones (like Feliway™ diffusers) and using pre-appointment sedation in selected anxious or aggressive cats. The medication we use most commonly is Gabapentin. Gabapentin has both analgesic and anticonvulsant properties and binds to calcium a2-d receptors in the dorsal horn of the spinal cord and forebrain, having an inhibitory effect (blocking release of excitatory neurotransmitters). Gabapentin was prospectively evaluated in a recent JAVMA article. In this study, both veterinarians and owners observed stress reduction, improved compliance, and less aggression in cats that received Gabapentin prior to traveling to the veterinary hospital.

Gabapentin has several properties that make it ideal for pre-appointment sedation including:

1. Inexpensive
2. Non-scheduled drug
3. Not bitter - can be mixed with food / made into suspension
4. Can use in addition to commonly injectable sedatives including Midazolam, Butorphanol and Propofol
5. No significant change in BP readings
6. Some decrease in HR

Adverse effects include:

1. Vomiting (reported in JAVMA, but this drug is generally not known for this)
2. Hypersalivation
3. Minor muscle fasciculations
4. Anisocoria (resolved within 6 hours)

The primary concern we have when using this drug is too much sedation, and the idea that smaller cats need lower doses. The standard dose for the average 5 kg cat is 100 mg, which is 20 mg/kg. Increased sedation was noted in smaller cats (getting 25-29 mg/kg). Therefore, in smaller and geriatric cats, we often recommend starting with 50 mg. Gabapentin is primarily excreted by the kidneys so we also recommend a lower dose in cats with pre-existing renal disease. In the JAVMA article, Gabapentin was given 90 minutes prior to the office visit and the general recommendation is to give it 2-3 hours prior to visit. It is not bitter and can be made into suspensions or mixed with a small amount of wet food/tuna juice. The owner can also use Feliway™ spray on towels covering the cat carrier. Post sedation owner instructions include keeping away from stairs / keeping indoors and avoiding contact with other cats, if possible. Also note that the cat may remain sleeping for up to 12 hours after the dosage.

At CVCA, we recommend avoiding pre-appointment sedation if we are unsure of the patient’s health status, if the cat is sick or has respiratory compromise.

Our experience with Gabapentin use in cats has been very positive. Occasionally, we see a cat that powers through Gabapentin and gets upset, but this is infrequent. The reduced stress of the owner (and our technicians) is palpable and we are convinced it leads to better owner compliance and a higher level of patient care.

**See last page for Works Cited Sections for “Reducing Stress in Cats with Gabapentin”**

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**Introducing Julie Andrie!**

**Julie Andrie, DVM, Diplomate, ACVIM (Cardiology)**

Introducing Dr. Andrie! We are excited Dr. Andrie is joining our Austin, TX teams from our Northern Virginia area during her three-year residency where she was so loved, to expand our availability inside of Austin Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center (AVES) and inside of VCA Capital Area Veterinary Specialists.

Dr. Julie Andrie, originally from a small town in Western Pennsylvania, graduated from the University of Pittsburgh with a Bachelor’s degree in Rehabilitation Science and a minor in Chemistry. She received her
Dr. Andrie completed a one year rotating internship at Kansas State University. She then joined the CVCA family in 2016 for a three year residency, which was successfully completed and diplomate status achieved in July 2019. She recently moved to the Austin, TX, area to continue her cardiology career with CVCA.

In her free time, Dr. Andrie enjoys spending time with her friends and family, exploring new restaurants and breweries, kayaking, paddleboarding, and being outdoors in the sun. She is excited for all of the new adventures and experiences the city of Austin has to offer. When she is not out and about, Dr. Andrie enjoys relaxing with her German shepherd, Jax, and her two cats, Weezy and Kira.

Dr. Andrie’s professional interests include management of feline cardiomyopathies and trying to better understand complex feline patients. Her strong focus on the management of congestive heart failure, while working together with clients and their primary care veterinarians, allows her to meet her top priority of providing the best all-around care for her patients. Dr. Andrie strongly believes that it takes the right combination of client education and analyzing each situation from all possible perspectives to provide each patient with the highest quality of life while managing their cardiac disease. Dr. Andrie is currently seeing patients inside Austin Veterinary Emergency and Specialty Center on Ranch Road, as well as at VCA Capital Area Veterinary Specialists on Shoal Creek Boulevard.

What Clients Can Expect at CVCA Cardiac Care for Pets

Heart disease in pets can often remain hidden until advanced stages, but with early diagnosis and appropriate treatment, your pet can live a longer, healthier life with you and your family! Click the video below to see what clients can expect when visiting CVCA Cardiac Care for Pets.


Save The Date - Upcoming CE Events, Conferences & Exhibits

**SWVS 2019**

- **When:** Friday, September 27th - Sunday, September 29th
- **Where:** San Antonio, TX
- **Exhibiting:** Stop by and say hi!
- **Lecture:** Join CVCA’s Sara Beth Bordelon, DVM, MS, Diplomate, ACVIM (Cardiology) for a lunch lecture on Friday, Sept. 27th!

[Visit our website](https://www.cvcavets.com) to stay up-to-date with local CE Events, Conferences & more!
No Cost Client Education Materials

Our client education materials available to you at no cost. Heart murmur, nutritional supplements, dilated cardiomyopathy, business cards, clinic poster and more. Visit our Supply Request form, under the Veterinarians/Technicians tab on our website, to order materials today!

**NEW!** Referral Conversation Handout **NEW!** Clinic Poster

**Nutritional Supplements for Cardiac Patients** **Dilated Cardiomyopathy in Dogs**

Visit and Subscribe to CVCA's Monthly Blog!

Our monthly blog contains articles not solely heart focused, as we are hoping to educate the community and connect with pet owners along the way!

Interested in learning more about CVCA and staying up-to-date on industry-related topics and trends, [subscribe to our monthly blog by clicking today!](#)

Here's a look at our most recent posts:

- 10 Signs of Heart Disease in Dogs and Cats
- April is Pet First Aid Awareness Month with Our Animal Friends
- Keep Your Pet Safe During National Animal Poison Prevention Week
- Weak Heart from Dog Food? Some Dogs Recover!
Available Payment Options and Flexibility

Visit Payment Options for more information! If you have any questions, please email us at info@cvcavets.com.

Follow us on Social Media

CVCA Cardiac Care for Pets (Shoal Creek Austin) CAVS Location

CVCA Cardiac Care for Pets (Austin) AVES Location

@cvcavets

References for Gabapentin Article


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