

## Canine & Feline Heart Disease

# EVEN IF THEY SEEM HEALTHY, YOUR CAT OR DOG COULD BE AT RISK.

## Frequently asked questions



### How does heart disease affect pets?

- Up to 15% of younger dogs have heart disease.<sup>1,2</sup> As risk increases with age, up to 60% of older dogs may have heart disease.
- With cats, heart disease is often undetectable. However, research shows 15% of cats—1 in every 6—will have heart disease.<sup>3</sup>
- Additionally, heart disease is difficult to diagnose in both cats and dogs. Signs can be subtle and are easily mistaken for changes associated with aging.
- There is no cure for heart disease, but testing and early detection can make a significant difference in your pet's quality of life.

#### References

1. Edmonton MH. School of veterinary medicine offers cardiology services. *LSU Today*. 2002;18(40).
2. Rush JE. Chronic valvular heart disease in dogs. Proceedings from: 26th Annual Waltham Diets/OSU Symposium for the Treatment of Small Animal Cardiology; October 19–20, 2002.
3. Paige CF, Abbott JA, Elvinger F, Pyle RL. Prevalence of cardiomyopathy in apparently healthy cats. *JAVMA*. 2009;234(11):1398–1403.

### How do I know if my pet is at risk?

- Heart disease affects cats and dogs differently, but call us immediately if your pet is lethargic, coughing, overly tired, reluctant to play, has difficulty breathing, or if they collapse or faint.
- Certain dog breeds are more prone to heart disease, including basset hound, beagle, boxer, Cavalier King Charles spaniel, German shepherd, golden retriever, Labrador retriever and others.\*
- Heart disease affects all cats, often “silently” and at any age. However, pure breeds such as the American shorthair, Maine coon, Persian, Siamese, sphinx and ragdoll are especially prone.

### What can I do to help?

- Watch for the warning signs identified in these FAQs. Take note of how your pets change with age and be especially mindful of variances in appetite and exercise.
- Maintain a healthy and active lifestyle for your pet, and be sure your pet gets a checkup at least once a year. Consider going more often as your pet ages.
- If your pet is suspected of having heart disease, we may ask to run a simple, affordable blood test (Cardiopet® proBNP) to help evaluate their risk.

