

Monitoring your dog's heart condition

Owner Logbook

Produced in collaboration with Mike Martin, Consultant Veterinary Cardiologist




Dechra

Cardisure[®]
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Monitoring your dog's heart condition

This logbook provides a simple and easy way to record how your dog is progressing with Cardisure treatment.

Through effective treatment it is possible to relieve the symptoms of heart disease and extend your dog's life. Therefore, it is important to ensure your dog is given his or her heart medication regularly, as prescribed by your vet.

Cardisure works by increasing the strength of heart contractions and by dilating (widening) blood vessels which makes it easier for the heart to pump blood around the body.

Your vet may well choose a combination of medicines to treat your dog's heart failure. These can be divided into three families according to their function, i.e: those which

- 1 Increase the strength of the heart contractions (inotropes) e.g. Cardisure
- 2 Dilate blood vessels (vasodilators) e.g. Cardisure
- 3 Remove fluid (diuretics) e.g. Furosoal

These medicines will improve the efficiency of your dog's heart and reduce the symptoms of heart failure. Treatment will not cure your dog's heart failure but will improve his or her quality of life.



Medication schedule tables can be found later on in this booklet. These can be completed daily to help you keep track of your dog's daily medication plan.

Home monitoring

Home monitoring provides a useful means of tracking the progress of your dog's heart condition. In the first two weeks, or until your dog's condition has been stabilised with treatment, please make a record daily. Thereafter make a record twice a week.

The importance of sleeping/resting respiratory rate (S/RRR)

It is important to familiarise yourself with your dog's normal breathing rate. In most cases, the resting respiratory rate of a healthy dog should be 15 to 25 breaths per minute. If your dog's breathing rate starts to increase it could indicate that your dog's heart failure is worsening.

If further copies of the home monitoring chart are required, please contact your veterinary surgeon to request a digital copy or another logbook.

How do I measure my dog's respiratory rate?

- 1 First, wait until your dog is resting or asleep, ideally lying on their side beside you
- 2 Next, observe the chest lift, when your dog breathes in, and fall when they breathe out. One rise and fall cycle is counted as one breath. You may also notice your dog's flank (tummy area) rising and falling with each breath too
- 3 Count the number of breathing cycles which occur in 60 seconds and mark this number on the home monitoring chart. Where measurement of a full 60 seconds is not possible, measure the amount of breathing cycles in 30 seconds and multiply your result by two.



Scan the QR code to watch Consultant Veterinary Cardiologist Mike Martin demonstrate how to record a dog's resting respiratory rate.

Home monitoring

Ensure you continue to monitor your dog, paying attention to the following three areas.

Cough

Coughing has two common causes in heart conditions: retained fluid within the chest or the enlarged heart pressing on the windpipes.

Score the severity or frequency of coughing from bad to good. With a long standing heart condition, at least a little coughing is common and is often tolerated by your dog.

Exercise

Once any congestion has been resolved with treatment (often within 5 to 10 days) a return to some exercise is good for the well-being of your dog and for the body's circulation.

The ability to exercise also reflects the ability of the heart to function and circulate blood, so it can be a useful indication of how well your dog is doing. Again this is a simple scoring system, comparing the ability to exercise now, to when your dog was well prior to this illness.



Appetite

Your dog's appetite may reflect his/her well-being. It is a simple scoring system, comparing appetite to when your dog was well prior to this illness.

If you become concerned about your dog's health, you should consult your veterinary surgeon immediately.

Nutrition and your dog

Nutrition can also play an important role in the care of CHF cases. Omega-3 fatty acids from marine sources support maintenance of lean body mass, appetite and normal cardiac rhythm. SPECIFIC™ is a range of veterinary pet nutrition made with high levels of fish and other marine ingredients to provide nutritional support for the management of many health conditions as well as helping keep dogs and cats healthy.



Find out more about the SPECIFIC™ range supporting dogs with heart and kidney problems here:



Home Monitoring

The happiness factor

This is a surprisingly useful overall score of how well your dog is. It is a simple scoring system, comparing how happy your pet is compared to when your dog was well prior to this illness.

Weight

One of the effects of heart failure is the accumulation of retained fluid in the chest or abdomen. One litre of fluid is equivalent to 1 kg in weight. Monitoring your dog's body weight is a useful means to track the loss or gain in fluid accumulation. With a long standing heart condition, like any long term illness, there is often a loss in body condition, resulting in a loss of weight (compared to normal prior to an illness).

We recommend weighing your pet weekly. It is often best to use the scales at your own vets for consistency and accuracy. If you have a record of your dog's weight prior to developing a heart condition, this can be particularly helpful.

Heart rate (HR) at rest

This is more difficult to record and not essential, but if it is possible to do, then it can provide useful information. The heart rate when 'in the vets' is always somewhat elevated because of excitement or nervousness, so does not represent the real 'relaxed' heart rate at home. The heart beat can be felt by placing your hands on both sides of the chest just inside the 'armpits'. You could purchase a cheap stethoscope and learn to listen to the heart rate. Feeling the pulse in the leg does not always represent the heart rate, as some abnormal or weak heart beats might not produce a palpable pulse, so it is better not to use this method.



Home Monitoring

Other parameters

It is sometimes useful to additionally record other parameters such as:

- Your dog's blood pressure if taken by your vet
- Your dog's waist line with a measuring tape, if there is abdominal fluid
- Some blood results, such as kidney function or electrolytes, as these can be affected by a change in your dog's dose of medications.
- How much your dog is drinking or urinating (compared to normal – prior to the illness).
- A change in medication or dose, as this might produce a change in some parameters.

There is a notes section at the back of this logbook which you could use to document these, where required.



Home monitoring

Month: _____ Year: _____

Date																	
Day																	
Heart rate / min																	
Respiration rate																	
50																	
40																	
35																	
30																	
25																	
20																	
18																	
16																	
14																	
12																	
10																	
Please score your pet: 1 = Very poor 2 = Poor 3 = OK 4 = Good 5 = Excellent																	
Appetite																	
Exercise level																	
Happiness																	
Cough																	

Home monitoring

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Date	Medication name	Dosage	Time	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Week of:										

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Week of:										

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Week of:										

Notes

www.dechra.co.uk | www.dechra.ie | www.caninecongestiveheartfailure.co.uk

CARDISURE: Cardisure contains pimobendan UK: [POM-V] IE: [POM]

Prescription decisions are for the person issuing the prescription alone. Use medicines responsibly. www.noah.co.uk/responsible

For further information contact: Dechra, Sansaw Business Park, Hadnall, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY4 4AS T +44 (0)1939 211200

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