



Dogs with heart problems

If your dog has been diagnosed with a heart problem, don't despair, there are many things you and your Vet can do to help him or her.

The heart is part of the circulatory system, along with the lungs and blood vessels. Just like in humans, a dog's heart acts like a pump to drive the circulation of the blood around the body. With each heart beat, it delivers blood rich in oxygen and nutrients to all the vital organs and tissues, keeping the dog fit and healthy. A heart problem can be present from birth; this is termed congenital heart disease. Or it can develop during the course of a dog's life-time, often in middle age; and is called acquired heart disease. Acquired heart disease accounts for around 95% of all heart conditions in dogs.

Acquired heart disease usually affects either the heart valves or the heart muscle. Your vet will be able to tell you which type of problem that your dog has. Both of these acquired diseases can result in heart failure. Heart failure in dogs is not like a heart attack in people.

Mitral Valve Disease (MVD) is the most common form of acquired heart disease in dogs. It generally occurs in small to medium size dogs rather than big dogs. There seems to be a genetic predisposition to the development of disease as some breeds are more susceptible than others. In MVD, the heart valve(s) gradually become thickened, lumpy, distorted and leaky, so that when the ventricle pumps, some of the blood flows backwards into the atrium. This backward flow creates a noise that your veterinary surgeon can hear with a stethoscope. This noise is called a murmur. Vets often grade a murmur depending on how loud they are compared to the normal sounds when the heart beats.

Signs of heart failure can initially be quite mild and so may be difficult to pick up. However, as the disease progresses, the signs can become more severe as the heart's function deteriorates. This stage is known as congestive heart failure, when the heart is no longer able to pump sufficient blood around the body.

For more information visit www.vetmedin.co.uk or follow the link on our website at www.powisvets.co.uk



SIGNS INCLUDE

- Reduced ability to exercise
- Coughing
- Difficulty in breathing or a change to breathing rate
- Lack of energy or depressed appearance
- Poor appetite
- Weakness
- Anxiety and restlessness during the night
- Fainting

These signs occur because of fluid build up or because the vital organs are not supplied with enough blood, and therefore the oxygen, they require.

Although your dog may have been diagnosed with a heart disease such as Mitral Valve Disease or Dilated Cardiomyopathy there are many things you can do to help your dog live a longer, better life.

Free online webinars for pet owners

CPD Solutions, an organisation offering invaluable continuing professional development courses for Vets and Nurses have teamed up with The Veterinary expert, an organisation committed to being the most reliable, respected and trusted source of pet information available online, to bring dog and cat owners a free webinar series called Pet lifesavers.

Pet Lifesavers is a series of three free webinars for dog and cat owners on Emergencies and First Aid. The presentations are designed to help owners to recognise emergency and potential emergency situations and hazards. Many owners still don't know that foods such as raisins, garlic, onions and chocolate are toxic for pets – you can help keep your pets safe with the information in these webinars.

If you would like to take advantage of this very informative advice, please visit www.petlifesavers.com

Staff news

We would like to welcome **Alan Muir** BVMS MRCVS to the practice. Allan has a special interest in birds and other exotic animals. He joined us in December from Glasgow University's School of Veterinary Medicine and has already become a valuable member of our team.

Opening hours

8.30am – 7.00pm weekdays

10.00am – 12.00pm Saturdays

Consulting hours

9.00am – 10.30am,

2.30pm – 4.30pm &

5.00pm – 7.00pm weekdays

9.30am – 12.00pm Saturdays

Consultations are by appointment only, please call the surgery to book.

19 Audnam
Wordsley
Stourbridge
West Midlands DY8 4AJ
T: 01384 372849
W: www.powisvets.co.uk



Meet the handsome Blue!!

Blue is a 2 year old Red Merle Border Collie who belongs to one of our Student Veterinary Nurses, Kim. The reason he is called Blue is because he has one brown eye and one blue eye.

As a Border Collie, Blue needs a lot of mental and physical stimulation and Kim makes sure he gets this by taking part in agility with him and using his finely tuned instincts to teach him tricks. You will see from the photo of him on the beach, his favourite trick is to stand on his hind legs and walk backwards!!!! Something he apparently does quite often without being asked!!!!

He has been going to agility for around a year now and has a fantastic time doing it. To prove the point that this is a massively stimulating activity for Blue, when asked, Kim described Blue as 'totally hyper at the moment because agility classes have been closed for the winter!!!!' Both her and Blue are looking forward to classes commencing again in March.

As you can see in the other Photo of Blue, proudly showing off his rosettes, so far he has won prizes for 'Fastest New dog' and 'Second Most Handsome dog'. As he has only being taking part in agility for a year, it looks like he is going to turn into a little superstar!!!!

