



# February

## Heart Health Month & Pet Dental Month

### Questions of the Month

- 1) My patient had been diagnosed with Chronic Degenerative Valve Disease (CDVD). Do I need to give him prophylactic antibiotics to prevent endocarditis?
- 2) My patient has a heart murmur, is it safe to anesthetize him/her for a dental procedure?
- 3) How do I educate my clients about the importance of addressing heart healthcare?

### Prophylactic Antibiotics in Dogs with Mitral Valve Disease Undergoing Dental Procedures: Yes or No?

When I was in veterinary school (a few years back), we were taught that dogs with heart murmurs secondary to chronic degenerative (mitral) valve disease should be put on prophylactic antibiotics prior to having their teeth cleaned. The concern was that the dental procedure itself would result in bacteria becoming seeded in the the blood stream leading to a bacterial infection (endocarditis) on the mitral valve leaflets. However, the recommendations have changed. [READ MORE...](#)

### Heart Murmurs and Anesthesia

If a heart murmur is detected in an asymptomatic patient prior to anesthesia, consider the following general recommendations:

- Soft murmurs in puppies: thoracic radiographs +/- echocardiogram
- Loud murmur in puppies: thoracic radiographs and an echocardiogram
- New murmur in an adult dog: thoracic radiographs +/- echocardiogram

If there is no radiographic evidence of heart enlargement, or only mild enlargement, but no evidence of left sided heart failure in an adult dog, heart friendly anesthesia (no (dex)domitor) and judicious use of fluid support (to avoid overload) is generally acceptable. But keep in mind, an echocardiogram is recommended at some point to characterize the cause of the murmur and to develop a long term cardiac care plan. Loud murmurs in puppies...beware. They may have significant congenital heart disease and an echocardiogram is indicated. Cats, you ask? If they have a heart murmur, an echocardiogram is always indicated.

### How do I educate my clients about the importance of addressing heart healthcare?

No worries! Veterinary Cardiology Specialists has created a client handout to provide to your clients. It is a great way to introduce the importance of their pets' heart healthcare. [Click Here for a printable PDF version](#) for your use.