



NEW OFA Heart Certification

BREAKING NEWS! OFA has created a new advanced cardiac program for heart certifications in dogs to include both congenital and acquired heart disease.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ADVANCED CARDIAC PROGRAM INCLUDE:

- **Two-tiered clearance: congenital and adult onset cardiac disease**
- **Improved statistical data regarding prevalence and progression of canine cardiac disease**
- **Exams limited to ACVIM/ECVIM Cardiology Diplomates**
- **Results meet all CHIC cardiac criteria**
- **No changes to OFA submission procedures**

The previous OFA forms were oriented only to congenital heart disease and did not address clearance for dogs susceptible to adult onset disease such as arrhythmogenic right ventricular cardiomyopathy (ARVC), dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM) and chronic degenerative valve disease (CDVD). The minimum age for clearance for congenital or adult onset cardiac disease remains at 12 months. However, clearance for adult onset cardiac disease is valid for only 1 year from the time of the exam. Due to the prevalence of arrhythmias associated with adult onset cardiac disease in Boxers and Dobermans, clearance for this population of dogs also requires a Holter test to be performed within 90 days of the regular cardiac exam. The interpretation of the Holter test is limited to a board certified veterinary cardiologist.

In addition, the previous forms were signed by the clinician and given to the representative of the dog (i.e. owner, breeder) to be submitted to OFA. Therefore, it was common that individuals would not submit forms for dogs that did not pass. This process did not allow for a data base regarding prevalence and progression of cardiac disease to be compiled. Now the forms are in triplicate. The representative of the dog receives a copy that they can submit to OFA for public record if they choose. The cardiologist has 2 copies, one they keep and one they send to OFA for creating a data base. The copy submitted to OFA by the cardiologist is not public record.

A new standard for OFA cardiac evaluations has now been set as the availability and use of the new form is limited to board certified veterinary cardiologists. For more information about the new advanced cardiac program, click on this link: http://www.ofa.net/pdf/ACA_Announcement.pdf.