



YOUR CAT'S HEALTH, OUR PASSION • VOLUME 3, ISSUE 6 • JUNE 2011 NEWSLETTER

FELINE HYPERTROPHIC CARDIOMYOPATHY

Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM) is the most common heart disease in cats. HCM is a mild to severe thickening of the muscle in the heart's left ventricle. The exact cause of HCM is unknown. While the disease occurs most frequently in specific breeds, such as the Maine Coon Cat, it is also commonly diagnosed in mixed-breed cats.

The disease can be seen in cats of almost any age. Symptoms can include labored or open-mouth breathing, anorexia, lethargy, weakness, fainting, heart murmur, or a pulse rate over 200. At the other extreme, kitties may experience a thromboembolic event; this occurs when a blood clot travels from the heart to other parts of the body (similar to when a human has a stroke). This can result in extreme discomfort, rear leg paralysis, or even eventual death.

Methods of assessing a kitty with suspected heart disease include labwork, x-rays, electrocardiogram (EKG), echocardiogram, and blood pressure monitoring. These tests allow us to determine if there are metabolic processes complicating the heart disease; the tests also measure the size of the heart and detect other possible anomalies in the chest cavity.

An EKG measures the heart's electrical activity, indicating the overall rhythm of the heart plus weaknesses in different parts of the heart muscle. An echocardiogram provides measurements of areas and muscles in the heart. It also assesses how well blood is flowing through the heart's chambers, and checks for functional problems (such as clots or obstructions). We work with board-certified specialists who perform these more-advanced and non-invasive procedures, and can easily provide a referral for your kitty.

If your kitty is diagnosed with HCM, medication is typically prescribed to help with heart function. These medications may include ACE inhibitors, beta blockers, and calcium channel blockers. There are many medications available within each of these classes. Medication may not be prescribed for some kitties who display no HCM symptoms, or for kitties with advanced HCM.

After initial diagnosis and treatment, regular cardiology follow-ups are important for assessing progression of the disease, which may dictate changes to medication. Prognostically, each case will vary in outcome. Some kitties with HCM will do very well, and lead a long and healthy life if their HCM does not progress, while other kitties may experience a more progressive disease process.

Although there is no known cure for HCM, early diagnosis, prompt treatment, and regular monitoring are important for your kitty's health and quality of life.

THIRD ANNUAL CAT'S MEOW ARTS & CRAFTS FAIR

We had a great time at our Arts & Crafts Fair on Sunday, May 22. The weather was lovely and there were many beautiful handmade items to purchase from 30 vendors. As they browsed, fairgoers enjoyed munching on snacks and listening to tracks spun by our deejay. The event closed with our raffle; fairgoers left with some really great prizes, including a Kindle, handmade cat trees, exam and diagnostics valued at \$270 from the Sacramento Cat Hospital, an autographed picture of Tony Shalhoub, and much more.

All fair proceeds will benefit the Sacramento Cat Hospital Foundation Benevolent Fund,

established to provide treatment for injured, sick, and feral cats. Some of these cats require extensive and costly treatment to save their lives. The Benevolent Fund also provides routine physicals, vaccinations, viral screening, food, water, and shelter to the hospital's foster cats until they find forever homes.

Please come by our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/sacramentocathospital) to see photos.

Thank you for your support, and we look forward to seeing you at next year's fair!

SACRAMENTO CAT HOSPITAL REFERRAL PROGRAM

Refer a friend to the Sacramento Cat Hospital, and receive a \$20 credit! If a new client lets us know you referred them, you'll receive a \$20 credit which can be used during your kitty's next visit. Ask us for more details.

FOCUS ON HEART HEALTH: JUNE SPECIAL OFFER FOR OUR READERS

Through June 30, receive a **free heartworm antibody test** (while supplies last) when you bring your kitty to the Sacramento Cat Hospital for a wellness exam. Please let us know if you'd like more information or to schedule your appointment.



Don't miss an issue of our newsletter! Sign up to receive each month's issue by email. To subscribe, just go to www.sacramentocathospital.com, or speak with one of our staff members.

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