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ECHOCARDIOGRAM

More and more veterinary practices are becoming equipped with sophisticated ultrasound equipment that can undertake B-mode, M-mode and Doppler scans, which are ideal for evaluating your pet's heart. Images can be frozen and then printed from the computer to provide a record of the examination.

Will my dog have to have an anesthetic?

Anesthesia is usually unnecessary, though often it is helpful to give a patient a mild anti-anxiety drug before the procedure. This is a great advantage of ultrasound. The technique is non-invasive but does involve clipping an area of hair and applying a water-soluble jelly on the skin. The technique is totally painless and most pets will lie comfortably while the scan is being performed. Occasionally, if the pet is very frightened or aggressive, a sedative may be necessary.

Is the technique affordable?

Although the initial cost of a scan may seem excessive, it has to be equated with the high cost of the equipment, the fact that specialist training is required in order to interpret the images and the time involved in carrying out the examination. Its value, particularly in cases such as pregnancy diagnosis, evaluation of the internal organs, heart function, blood flow and eyes, make it invaluable to your pet's well-being.