Celebrating **healthy** hearts

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Is there such thing as a 'Cardiac Diet'?



- Complete, balanced nutrition is best – avoid exclusion diets without guidance.
- Some links exist between heart disease and grain-free diets, but more studies are needed.
- Taurine is essential – deficiency can lead to enlarged heart or heart failure.
- Hundreds of "cardiac health" foods exist – *don't be fooled*: focus on quality, complete nutrition and optimal body weight.
- Pets with cardiac disease may have special dietary needs – consult your vet for personalised guidance.



Responsible breeding

Are you a breeder?

- Breed-specific heart testing schemes exist via breed clubs & the Veterinary Cardiovascular Society (VCS).
- HeartVets run local heart screening days where approved panel members and RCVS recognised Specialists in Veterinary Cardiology assess your animals.

Looking for a breeder?

- Beware the term '*health tested*'! Check:
  - Kennel Club: breed-specific health info
  - Veterinary cardiovascular society (VCS): cardiac screening info
- Key questions for Breeders:
  - What tests have been performed?
  - Do you have the test certification?
  - How are carrier/affected animals managed in the breeding programme?



HeartVets

HEART HAZARDS



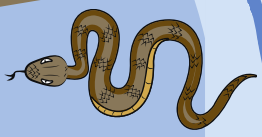
High-Risk UK Plants:

- Oleander (Nerium oleander) – patio & indoor
- Kalanchoe (multiple species) – patio & indoor
- Foxglove (Digitalis purpurea) – outdoor
- Yew (Taxus species) – outdoor

Other Dangers:

- Snake bites – European Adder can trigger dangerous arrhythmias.

Seek vet care immediately if snake bite is suspected.



- Human medications – blood pressure drugs, heart meds, stimulants, thyroid, cold/flu decongestants, antidepressants.

Seek immediate vet care if your pet eats medication that is not meant for them.



Healthy heart checks

Regular check-ups help keep your pet's heart healthy and spot important changes early.

Many practices offer wellness checks and nurse clinics

Useful monitoring tools:

- Blood pressure checks – detect high blood pressure
- Auscultation – listening for murmurs or abnormal rhythms
- Blood tests – screen for early cardiac changes
- ECG / Holter monitors – assess heart rhythm; small monitors can be worn at home to screen for dangerous underlying disase

