INFO: Degenerative Mitral Valve Disease (DMVD)

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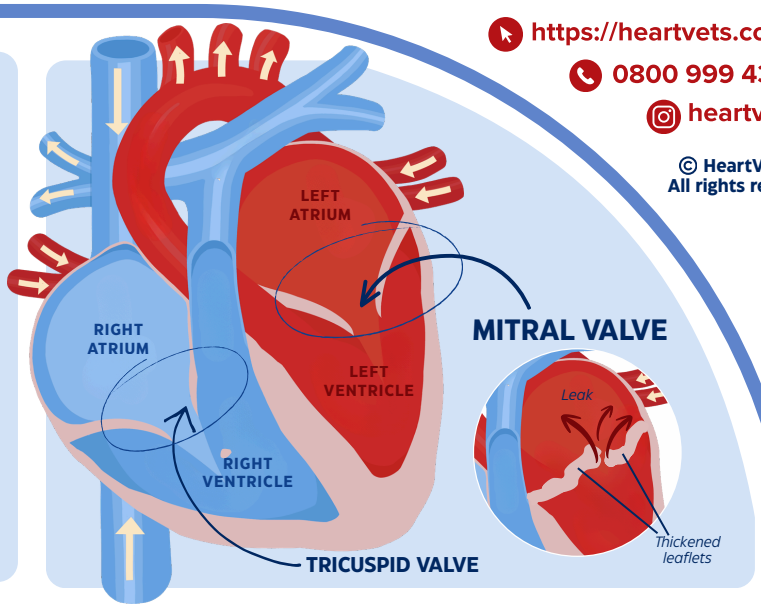
WHAT IS DMVD?

The **degenerative change** (thickening) of the mitral valve leaflets, causing the **valve to leak**.

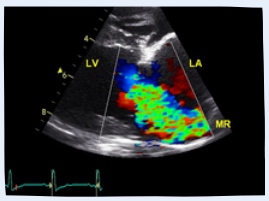
This becomes worse over time, leading to heart **enlargement** and eventually **congestive heart failure** (CHF).

The disease can also affect the **tricuspid valve**, but often to a lesser extent.

→ DMVD can also be known as myxomatous mitral valve disease (MMVD).



HOW DO YOU DIAGNOSE DMVD?



- Your vet may hear a **heart murmur** ('whooshing' noise) - this simply indicates a change to the normal blood flow, **it does not tell us what the cause is**. They may recommend a heart scan to investigate.
- **Echocardiography** (heart ultrasound scan) is used to look at the heart **structures** and **function**. Evidence of irregular **thickening** of the mitral valve and presence of a **leak** helps to diagnose DMVD.
- The scan will also show whether there is evidence of **chamber enlargement** or **CHF**.

WHAT OTHER TESTS ARE USEFUL?

- **ECG:** monitors electrical activity, checking heart rate and rhythm. Patients with enlarged hearts can develop abnormal rhythms (arrhythmias).
- **Xray:** looking for fluid in the lungs or other lung disease.

WHAT ARE THE STAGES?

Clinical signs include: Reduced exercise tolerance, persistent cough, lethargy, increased respiratory rate, weakness or collapse

A	B1	B2	C	D
PATIENTS AT RISK OF DEVELOPING DMVD *(Certain breeds, family history)*	**PATIENTS WITH EVIDENCE OF DMVD ON ECHOCARDIOGRAPHY**			
No evidence of DMVD on echocardiography	Heart murmur No clinical signs No evidence of cardiac enlargement	+/- Clinical signs associated with cardiac enlargement Evidence of cardiac enlargement *(but no evidence of CHF)*	Clinical signs of CHF Evidence of cardiac enlargement and CHF	Clinical signs of CHF Evidence of active CHF despite treatment *(refractory to treatment)*

Treatment indicated: NONE

Treatment indicated: PIMOBENDAN
Slows disease progression
Increases time without clinical signs
Increases life span

Treatment indicated: DIURETICS
Remove pulmonary oedema (fluid in the lungs)
Reduce ascites (fluid in the abdomen)

See our website for information on heart testing schemes

ADDITIONAL TREATMENT

- **ACE inhibitors:** improve circulation and help the heart pump more efficiently.
- **Spironolactone:** weak diuretic and slows heart scarring.
- **Anti-arrhythmic/rate control drugs:** to slow heart rate in fast arrhythmias and reduce dangerous irregular beats
- **Surgery:** mitral valve repair under cardiac bypass for specific patients in CHF

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