

# More Life To Love: Your guide to your dog's heart health

Curious about your dog's heart health? There's a lot to consider. **The good news is that, armed with a few facts, you can help detect certain types of heart disease early and help keep your dog happy and active.** Knowing when to contact your vet and what to ask is key.

This sheet provides helpful talking points and highlights important questions to ask your vet.

## What is heart disease in dogs?

There are several different types of heart disease in dogs. These are the most common:

### Myxomatous mitral valve disease (MMVD)



MMVD is the most common type of canine heart disease, and is most often seen in small-to medium-sized dogs. In MMVD, the mitral valve slowly deteriorates and becomes leaky. Over time, blood leaks in the wrong direction of flow, causing problems and impacting the heart's ability to pump effectively.

### Dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM)



DCM is most common in large or giant dog breeds. It affects the heart muscle and valves, causing blood to leak — creating a similar outcome to MMVD. Over time, the heart becomes enlarged, weak and unable to pump blood effectively and the disease progresses more rapidly.

Congestive heart failure (CHF) occurs when the heart can no longer compensate for the worsening disease, causing fluid buildup and the onset of symptoms. Early diagnosis and treatment can help delay symptoms, giving your dog more time to be happy and active, even without a cure.

**IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION:** VETMEDIN® Solution (pimobendan oral solution) and VETMEDIN® (pimobendan) Chewable Tablets are for use in dogs with clinical evidence of heart failure only. The most common side effects reported in field studies were poor appetite, lethargy, diarrhea, dyspnea, azotemia, weakness, and ataxia. VETMEDIN should not be given in case of hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, aortic stenosis, or any other clinical condition where an augmentation of cardiac output is inappropriate for functional or anatomical reasons. For more information, see full prescribing information for [Chewable Tablets](#), or full prescribing information for [Solution](#).

**IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION:** VETMEDIN®-CA1 (pimobendan) is for use only in dogs with preclinical MMVD that have a moderate or loud mitral murmur due to mitral regurgitation and cardiomegaly. The most common side effects seen in dogs with Stage B2 MMVD while taking VETMEDIN-CA1 Chewable Tablets are cough, vomiting, diarrhea, lethargy (lack of energy), and localized pain (such as in the neck or legs). **It is a violation of Federal law to use this product other than as directed in the labeling. Conditionally approved by FDA pending a full demonstration of effectiveness under application number 141-556.** [Click here](#) for full prescribing information.

## What should I ask my vet?

It's a good idea to plan any questions that you would like to ask your vet. Here is a checklist that you can take to your appointment with you.

### Assessing my dog's heart health:

- Based on my dog's breed, age or health, is my dog at risk of heart disease or has it already developed early disease?
- What diagnostic options are available to check my dog's heart (such as ultrasound, X-ray, ECG)?
- Has a murmur or anything abnormal been previously detected?

### Monitoring my dog's heart:

- What signs should I be looking for and monitoring at home as the disease progresses?
- What should I do if I notice any of these signs change?
- How often should I bring my dog in for check ups?
- Are there any tools I could use to monitor my pet at home?

### My notes:

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## Is my dog at risk of heart disease?

All dogs can develop heart disease, but small to medium-sized dogs are especially at risk for MMVD. Both MMVD and DCM become more common with age, and certain breeds are more predisposed — see examples below.

### MMVD:

- Cavalier King Charles Spaniel
- Chihuahua
- Dachshund
- Maltese
- Miniature Poodle
- Miniature Schnauzer
- Shih Tzu

### DCM:

- Cocker Spaniel
- Doberman Pinscher
- Golden Retriever
- Great Dane
- Irish Wolfhound
- Labrador Retriever

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**If you are concerned that your dog might be at risk for developing heart disease, it's important to talk to your veterinarian about early screening.**

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**If you would like additional information, please visit [www.vetmedin.com](http://www.vetmedin.com).**