



Endocardiosis

(Valve disease/Valvular insufficiency)

What is Endocardiosis?

Endocardiosis is the development and accumulation of fibrous tissue within the heart valves which in turn alters the physical structure of the valves. It can affect the Tricuspid or Mitral valves. This causes the heart to have to work harder to ensure adequate blood flow.

Causes

Endocardiosis is a degenerative condition and is an inherited condition.

Affected Animals

Although all dog can be affected, Endocardiosis tends to affect dogs over the age of ten but younger dogs can also be affected. Certain breeds are predisposed to Endocardiosis such as Cavalier King Charles Spaniels, Poodles, Chihuahuas and Dachshunds.

Clinical Signs

Clinical signs will vary depending on the severity of the disease but can include a heart murmur (detected by use of a stethoscope), coughing, exercise intolerance, lethargy, weakness, abdominal distention, increased respiratory rate and effort and fainting.

Diagnosis and Treatment Options

A physical examination by a veterinary surgeon along with diagnostic tests such as blood samples, radiographs, electrocardiography (ECG) and echocardiograms. Treatment will vary depending on severity and progression of the disease but treatment will be lifelong once started although dose rates may fluctuate.