

## Heart Murmur – Cats

Today during your pet's exam, an abnormal heart sound called a heart murmur was detected with a stethoscope.

A heart murmur is an abnormal sound produced by turbulent blood flow through the heart. The most common heart disease in cats is called hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, which causes thickening of the heart muscle. This thickening of the muscle impairs the heart's ability to relax and fill and can result in a heart murmur or an abnormal heart sound called a gallop. Other cardiomyopathies (changes to the heart muscle), congenital heart defects (birth defects), and valve problems can also cause heart murmurs in cats.

While heart murmurs may be present in cats for benign reasons (termed flow or innocent murmurs), any abnormal heart sound should be further evaluated and monitored. Structural heart disease can progress over time and can result in heart failure or other life-threatening complications.

We recommend you make an appointment with a veterinary cardiologist or your primary care veterinarian to investigate your cat's heart murmur.

If your cat shows any signs of difficulty breathing, trouble using the back legs, distress, weakness, collapse, or exercise intolerance, please have him/her evaluated emergently, as these could be signs of a life-threatening condition.