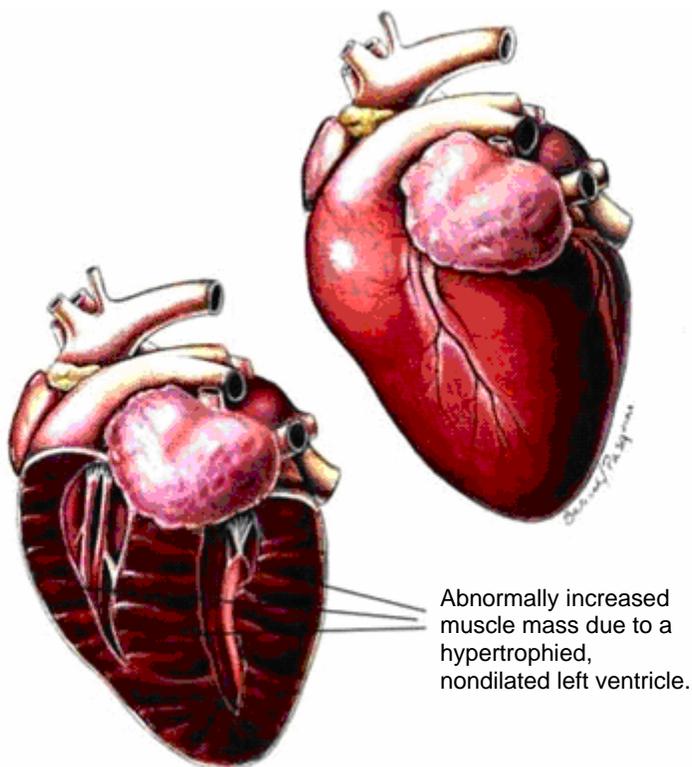


Feline Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy



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Diagnostic Plan

History
Physical examination
Chest auscultation
Palpation of femoral pulses and hindlimb musculature
Blood work
Urinalysis
Electrocardiography
Chest X-rays
Echocardiography
X-rays of the heart and abdominal blood vessels after dye injection

Therapeutic Plan

Enforced rest
Bronchodilators
Oxygen therapy
Removal of fluid from the chest and abdomen
Drugs that dilate blood vessels
Aspirin
Beta blockers
Heparin
Surgery

Nutritional Plan

Nutrition that avoids excess levels of sodium

Feline Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy

Your cat has hypertrophic cardiomyopathy. Cardiomyopathy is a disease of the heart muscle characterized by fluid build-up in the body and clot formation in arteries. Common clinical signs include difficulty breathing, poor appetite, hind limb weakness and/or paralysis. It is not uncommon for some cats to have no clinical signs except for detection of a heart murmur by your veterinarian during a yearly check-up. It is treated with rest, medication and dietary management. This client education sheet will help you learn more about feline hypertrophic cardiomyopathy and will review your veterinarian's instructions for your pet's care at home, as well as follow-up with the veterinary health care team.

What You Should Know About Feline Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy

The heart has four chambers: two atria on the top of the heart and two ventricles on the bottom. Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy is a disease characterized by increased muscle mass in the left ventricle. The walls of the left ventricle are abnormally thick, and disturbances in the normal rhythm of the heart are often seen. Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy causes heart failure with accumulation of fluid in the lungs, abdomen or both. Thromboemboli (clots that obstruct blood vessels) can form sometimes in the arteries of cats affected by this disease.

Causes

While the cause of hypertrophic cardiomyopathy is currently unknown, multiple causes are suspected. There appears to be a predisposition for this disease in Maine coon cats.

Diagnosis

The first step that your veterinarian will make in diagnosing hypertrophic cardiomyopathy is to thoroughly examine your cat. During physical examination, heart murmurs and fluid in the chest and abdomen may be detected. Your veterinarian will carefully check your cat's pulse and feel its back legs for coolness or unusual firmness caused by thromboembolism. X-rays of the chest and abdomen are useful for diagnosing heart enlargement and fluid accumulation. Ultrasound of the

heart is necessary to diagnose the condition and function of the heart. Blood pressure measurement can reveal hypertension (high blood pressure). ECGs of the heart help show rhythm disturbances which may further impair normal function. Blood tests and urinalyses are commonly performed to assess the effects of heart failure on other organs.

Treatment and Home Care

Your veterinarian may treat the congestive heart failure of hypertrophic cardiomyopathy with some or all of the following therapies: low-sodium foods; rest; diuretics; drugs to dilate blood vessels; oxygen; drugs to manage arrhythmias and improve heart function; and sometimes fluid removal from the chest and abdomen. Therapy for thromboembolism includes giving drugs to dilate blood vessels, prevent clotting and break up clots.

Home care consists of giving all prescribed medications, monitoring your cat for resolution of clinical signs and feeding your cat based on your veterinarian's instructions. Some drugs that your veterinarian uses to treat heart disease may have side effects. Report any abnormal behavior – such as poor appetite, vomiting or difficulty breathing – to your veterinarian immediately. You may need to return to the hospital for diagnostic tests that your veterinarian will use to check the effectiveness of therapy.

Nutritional Plan

If your cat has hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, your veterinarian may suggest a dietary change based on your pet's age and body condition, the clinical signs and the presence or absence of disease in other organs and body systems. Many cats with congestive heart failure benefit from foods low in sodium. These foods reduce the workload of the heart by reducing fluid accumulation in the body. Foods with moderate sodium restriction are useful for managing early heart failure. Such foods include Hill's® Prescription Diet® k/d® Feline Renal Health and Hill's® Prescription Diet® g/d® Feline Early Cardiac-Healthy Aging.

Transitioning Food

Unless recommended otherwise by your veterinarian, gradually introduce any new food over a seven-day period. Mix the new food with your pet's former food, gradually increasing its proportion until only the new food is fed.

If your pet is one of the few that doesn't readily accept a new food, try warming the canned food to body temperature, hand feeding for the first few days, or mixing the dry food with warm water (wait ten minutes before serving). Feed only the recommended food. Don't feed additional salt or any snacks that may contain sodium. Be patient but firm with your pet. This is important because the success or failure of treatment depends to a large degree on strict adherence to the new food.

Presented as an educational service by



Home Care Instructions

Client's Name: _____

Patient's Name: _____

Medication(s): _____

Nutritional Recommendation: _____

Follow-Up Appointment: _____

(Hospital Stamp Area Above)

REGULAR VISITS WILL HELP OUR VETERINARY HEALTH CARE TEAM PROVIDE FOR YOUR PET'S BEST INTEREST.