

## THE ULTRASONOGRAPHY EXAM: Preparing For Your Pet's Appointment:

- Please arrive 15 minutes prior to your pet's scheduled appointment time.
- Please bring a copy of your pet's medical records (e.g.: doctor's notes, original test results, etc.), as well as any radiographs /x-rays obtained by your pet's primary care team.
- Please do not feed your pet on the morning of the scheduled appointment. Please contact our team at 402.614.9000 for specific instructions if your pet is living with diabetes mellitus and/or is less than six (6) months old. Your pet may continue to drink water, and necessary medications may be given with a very small amount of food.
- Discuss with your family veterinarian her/his plan for your pet following the ultrasound procedure.

## OUTPATIENT ULTRASONOGRAPHY

### During Your Pet's Appointment:

- One of our Licensed Veterinary Technicians will greet your pet and family, and welcome you into a consultation room to explain the ultrasound procedure recommended by your family veterinarian. She/he will happily answer your questions about the scheduled imaging procedure.
- After thoroughly explaining the ultrasound procedure to you, the technician will escort your pet to the imaging suite for the ultrasound procedure. Pet parents will not be present during the imaging study. Your pet's ultrasound will be performed by a board-certified veterinary internal medicine specialist.
- Ultrasound procedures are non-invasive. Your pet will be supported in a well-cushioned pillow, and trained Licensed Veterinary Technicians and Veterinary Assistants will hold and soothe your pet during the procedure so she/he is as relaxed as possible.
- Most ultrasound procedures do not require anesthesia or sedation. You will be informed and asked to sign a consent form should our medical team believe your pet needs anesthesia/sedation to complete the ultrasound procedure.
- Your pet's hair at the site of interest (e.g.: abdomen) will be shaved to obtain diagnostic quality images. A blue, non-toxic gel is applied to the shaved area to facilitate capturing high resolution images.
- Some patients may benefit from minimally invasive sampling of an internal structure if an abnormality is visualized during the ultrasound procedure. The sampling procedure, called a fine needle aspiration or FNA, typically does not require anesthesia or sedation. You will be informed and asked to sign a consent form should our medical team believe an FNA procedure is necessary.
- Following completion of the ultrasound procedure, your pet will be discharged with you to either return to your home or to your family veterinarian's hospital.
- If our medical team feels the ultrasound procedure might present a risk to your pet's well-being, we will immediately contact your family veterinarian before proceeding. If we feel your pet is unstable and requires immediate medical care, with your permission we will provide this care and subsequently contact your pet's primary care doctor to keep her/him updated.

### Results of the Ultrasound Procedure:

- You will receive a CD containing your pet's ultrasound images.
- A detailed report of your pet's ultrasound procedure will be promptly provided to your pet's primary care doctor. The board-certified veterinary internal medicine specialist who performed your pet's imaging test will also call your family veterinarian at the conclusion of the study to discuss the findings.
- Your pet's primary care doctor will contact you to discuss the findings of your pet's ultrasound procedure, as well as his/her recommendations for additional testing and/or treatment. Your family veterinarian has a comprehensive understanding of your pet's cumulative medical history and overall medical condition. Therefore, she/he is the most appropriate resource to answer your questions about specific testing and/or therapeutic recommendations.
- If an FNA procedure is performed, finalized results will be forwarded to your pet's primary care doctor as soon as they are available. Your family veterinarian will contact you to discuss them directly.

## COLLABORATION. COMMITMENT. CARE.

VCA Specialty Animal Hospitals work closely with the pet's primary veterinarian to provide comprehensive, specialty level veterinary care. Our board-certified specialists are up to date on the very latest developments in their field. They have access to the most sophisticated diagnostic and treatment tools and techniques, including ultrasonography, endoscopy, chemotherapy, radiation therapy, and advanced surgical procedures.

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PET HEALTHCARE IS OUR PASSION

# OUTPATIENT ULTRASONOGRAPHY



**VCA Midwest Veterinary Specialists of Omaha**



## WHAT IS ULTRASONOGRAPHY?

*Ultrasonography - or ultrasound - uses reflected sound waves to create pictures of what is inside your pet's body. It is a non-invasive, painless way to diagnose and stage many common diseases, and the best imaging method to evaluate fluid-filled and soft-tissue organs.*

## HOW DOES IT WORK?

*Using non-ionizing, high-frequency sound waves, the ultrasound equipment collects reflected "echoes" to generate an image of the inside of the body. The sound waves bounce off dense areas, which appear whiter or brighter in the ultrasound image; they pass through less dense areas like tissue or fluid, which will appear darker. The term "echogenicity" refers to the bright or white areas depicting density in an ultrasound.*



## THE DIAGNOSTIC ROLE OF ULTRASOUND

*Feline Hepatic Lipidosis – a common liver disease in cats. Ultrasonography can detect diffuse signs, including a decrease in blood vessels and an enlarged liver, and help diagnose other disease processes that may be causing the lipidosis.*

*Canine Hyperadrenocorticism – 'Cushing's syndrome' is one of the most common endocrine gland disorders in dogs. One or both adrenal glands will often be enlarged in both width and length.*

**ULTRAS ONOGRAPHY IS EXTREMELY SAFE,  
WITH NO KNOWN SIDE EFFECTS.**

## WHEN IS ULTRASONOGRAPHY USED?

*X-rays can't differentiate soft tissue – it appears as a gray shadow around bone structures on the film. Ultrasound can't penetrate bone, but can image soft tissues and detect fluid, such as blood or urine. It can show the structure of body organs like the liver, spleen, and uterus. Because ultrasound lets us "see" abnormalities, we can detect tumors and other problems. It is valuable in cardiology, used to monitor blood flow in the heart and the contractions of the heart muscle, and to assess structural defects. It can also check fetal health and monitor gestation in breeding animals. Ultrasound can detect many problems that X-rays can't, including:*

- **Nodules**
- **Masses**
- **Cysts**
- **Abscesses**
- **Congenital defects**
- **Muscular (tendon) abnormalities**



*Ultrasound can locate, count, and measure structures such as nodules and masses.*

## ULTRASONOGRAPHY IN CANCER DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

*Ultrasound-guided fine needle aspirates - biopsies - can help diagnose or rule out cancer, and help the veterinarian "stage" a pet's cancer or detect signs of metastasis to organs beyond the site of the tumor. It is also used to monitor a pet's response to cancer therapy.*

## ULTRASONOGRAPHY IN ABDOMINAL DISEASE DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

*Veterinary ultrasonography has been used since the 1980s, and has revolutionized the diagnosis and treatment of many serious diseases. Ultrasound lets veterinarians visualize several abdominal organs:*

- **Liver**
- **Spleen**
- **Gall bladder**
- **Adrenal glands**
- **Pancreas**
- **Kidneys**
- **Urinary bladder**
- **Sections of the stomach and intestine**

