

Celebrating **healthy** hearts

Is there such thing as a **'Cardiac Diet'**?



- **Complete, balanced nutrition** is best – avoid exclusion diets without guidance.
- Some links exist between heart disease and grain-free diets, but more studies are needed.
- **Taurine** is essential – deficiency can lead to enlarged heart or heart failure.
- Hundreds of “cardiac health” foods exist – *don't be fooled*: focus on **quality, complete** nutrition and **optimal body weight**.
- Pets with **cardiac disease** may have special dietary needs – consult your vet for personalised guidance.



Responsible breeding

Looking for a breeder?

- Beware the term *'health tested'*! Check:
 - **Kennel Club**: breed-specific health info
 - **Veterinary cardiovascular society (VCS)**: cardiac screening info
- **Key questions** for Breeders:
 - What tests have been performed?
 - Do you have the test certification?
 - How are carrier/affected animals managed in the breeding programme?



Are you a breeder?

- Breed-specific **heart testing schemes** exist via breed clubs & the Veterinary Cardiovascular Society (VCS).
- HeartVets run local **heart screening days** where approved panel members and RCVS recognised Specialists in Veterinary Cardiology assess your animals.

High-Risk UK Plants:

- **Oleander** (Nerium oleander) – patio & indoor
- **Kalanchoe** (multiple species) – patio & indoor
- **Foxglove** (Digitalis purpurea) – outdoor
- **Yew** (Taxus species) – outdoor



Other Dangers:

- **Snake bites** – European Adder can trigger dangerous arrhythmias.

Seek vet care immediately if snake bite is suspected.



- **Human medications** – blood pressure drugs, heart meds, stimulants, thyroid, cold/flu decongestants, antidepressants.

Seek immediate vet care if your pet eats medication that is not meant for them.



Regular check-ups help keep your pet's heart healthy and spot important changes early.

Many practices offer wellness checks and nurse clinics

Useful monitoring tools:

- **Blood pressure** checks – detect high blood pressure
- **Auscultation** – listening for murmurs or abnormal rhythms
- **Blood tests** – screen for early cardiac changes
- **ECG / Holter** monitors – assess heart rhythm; small monitors can be worn at home to screen for dangerous underlying disease



Healthy heart checks