



## Information for Owners – Ultrasound

Ultrasound is a painless procedure that uses sound waves to produce images of the internal organs. An abdominal ultrasound allows visualization of organs including the liver, gallbladder, spleen, kidneys, adrenal glands, urinary bladder, reproductive tract, pancreas, stomach, small and large (colon) intestines, abdominal lymph nodes, and blood vessels. An echocardiogram (cardiac ultrasound) allows a detailed examination of the structure and function of the heart, for evaluation of both congenital and acquired heart disease.

Ultrasound also allows guided access for minimally invasive sampling (fine needle aspiration) of masses and fluid accumulations. In some cases, a tissue sample may be required (biopsy) – this is a more complicated procedure and requires clotting profiles and general anaesthesia.

To prepare your pet for their ultrasound examination, please do not feed your pet after 8 pm the night before the procedure (unless your pet is a diabetic, in which case, take advice from your primary veterinarian). It is important that your pet is fasted for an abdominal ultrasound because a full stomach can make imaging organs around the stomach difficult. Free access to water should be provided. If possible, please do not let your pet urinate within 1 hour before the study – a full or partially full urinary bladder is very helpful for a complete examination.

The hair on the abdomen (for abdominal ultrasound), chest wall (for thoracic ultrasound, echocardiography), or neck (for neck region ultrasound) will be clipped prior to the examination. Your pet will be sedated for this procedure unless medically contraindicated – your primary veterinarian will inform us if there are any contraindications to sedation. Following the examination, the ultrasonographer will discuss the findings with your veterinarian. We will also email a report to your veterinarian by the following morning.