



Pharmaceutical Recommendations for Optimal Ultrasound Studies

Disclaimer: These are reference protocols only. The primary veterinarian should determine the safest approach for each patient, considering both emotional and physical well-being.

Key Points

Both Pre-Visit Pharmaceuticals (PVPs) and Sedation are highly encouraged for ALL ultrasound studies—including echocardiograms.

Pre-Visit Pharmaceuticals (PVPs)

Given by mouth the night before and 1–2 hours prior to ultrasound.

Gabapentin - Action: Calming, reduces anxiety, provides mild sedation - Dog dose: 10–40 mg/kg PO - Cat dose: 10–20 mg/kg PO or 50–100 mg per cat (not per kg) - Notes: - May intensify effects of other sedatives - For best results, give a loading dose the night before

Trazodone - Action: Anxiolytic, sedation - Dog dose: 3–10 mg/kg PO (max 300 mg) - Cat dose: 50 mg per cat (not per kg), 1–2 hours before needed - Notes: - May cause sleepiness or, rarely, mild excitement - Use caution if combining with other serotonin-increasing drugs

Feline Procedural Sedation

For Echocardiograms (Cardioprotective Protocol): - Midazolam (0.2 mg/kg IV) plus Butorphanol (0.2–0.4 mg/kg IV) - OR Alfaxalone (1–2 mg/kg IV) plus Butorphanol (0.2 mg/kg IV)

For Abdominal Ultrasound: - If cardiomyopathy is present/suspected, use cardioprotective protocol - Preferred: Butorphanol (0.2–0.4 mg/kg) plus dexmedetomidine IM or IV - Alternatives: - Ketamine (2–4 mg/kg IV) plus diazepam (0.2–0.3 mg/kg IV) or midazolam (0.3 mg/kg IV) - “Kitty Magic”: 0.1–0.2 ml each of ketamine, dexmedetomidine, and buprenorphine IM

Canine Procedural Sedation

For Echocardiograms (Cardioprotective Protocol): - Butorphanol (0.2–0.4 mg/kg IV) plus diazepam (0.3 mg/kg IV) or midazolam (0.15 mg/kg IV)

For Abdominal Ultrasound: - If cardiomyopathy is present/suspected, use cardioprotective protocol - Preferred: Butorphanol (0.2–0.4 mg/kg) plus dexmedetomidine IM or IV

Questions? Contact Franimal's Solutions for more info or clarification.

Resources

Lindquist, E., Frank, J., Molder, P., Lobetti, R. (2015). The Curbside Guide: Diagnosis & Treatment of Common Sonographically Detected Disease: Canine & Feline. SonoPath, LLC.

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