



What is HCM?

HCM stands for hypertrophic cardiomyopathy. HCM is a heart condition where the heart muscle thickens, particularly the left ventricle, which reduces the efficiency of the heart.

How common is HCM?

HCM is the most common heart disease in cats, but it only occurs in about 10% of the general cat population.

Why should you be concerned about this disease?

Although HCM is found in all cats, it may be present in purebred cats like our beautiful Maine Coons due to a genetic predisposition.

How is HCM diagnosed?

Start with a trip to your veterinarian for a thorough physical exam, with a focus on listening to the heart for abnormal heart rhythms, murmurs or any excessive sounds during breathing. Additionally, your vet will check for poor circulation in the feet and nail beds. Blood work might be checked to determine if there is a medical cause for HCM. There is a genetic test for HCM, but it is not completely reliable. *A vet can also do a BNP test (blood test) which indicates potential heart disease, but it is not a definitive test. The most definitive way to diagnose HCM is the echocardiogram which is an ultrasound of the heart.*

How is HCM treated?

There are a number of medications that may help cats with HCM. Plan on working with your vet to determine a treatment plan that would work best for your cat.

Where do I get an echocardiogram done?

Veterinary cardiologists will do an echocardiogram. It typically lasts for about 20 minutes and most cats do not need to be sedated. Alternatively, there are HCM clinics at various places throughout the country. More information about these clinics will be posted on our page.

How often should I get an echocardiogram done?

We recommend getting one at least every two years.