

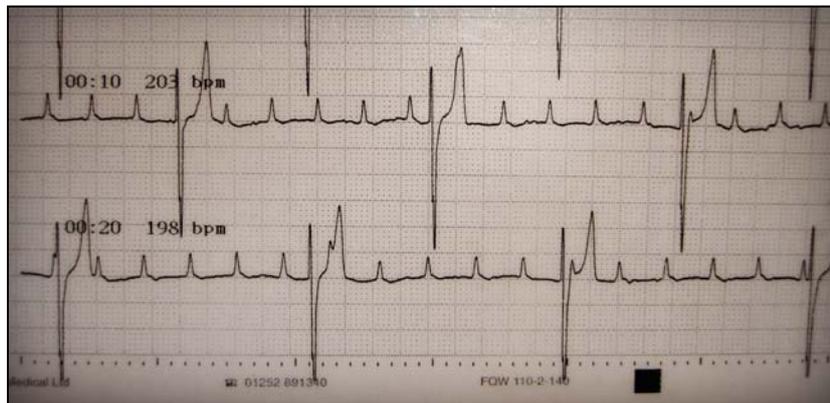


SERVICES WE OFFER:

Electrocardiogram (ECG)

What is it?

An ECG is a simple, pain free but useful test which records the rhythm and electrical activity of the heart and produces them as a paper or digital trace for the cardiologist to interpret. An ECG can detect abnormal heart rhythms (arrhythmia), can give indications of chamber size and function and indicate any changes or abnormalities in the electrical signals that make the heart beat.



The two types of ECG we Offer

1. Basic ECG

This is an ECG trace done in the consultation and is of 5 – 10 minute duration. It produces a paper trace and records the hearts activity over the 5 – 10 minutes that the trace is being recorded. You are welcome to stay with your pet whilst the ECG is performed.

2. 24 Hour Ambulatory ECG

Also known as a 'holter monitor' this is a small portable ECG that is attached to the patient and records the hearts electrical activity over a 24 hour period. The patient goes home wearing the monitor and we ask you to keep a diary of your animals activity during the 24 hour period that he/she is wearing it. The data is all recorded on a Flash card (similar to those found in some digital cameras) and once it is removed from the monitor the results can be downloaded into a special computer programme and the cardiologist can then read the results and produce a detailed report on the rhythm and electrical activity of your animals heart over that 24hour period.

What is involved?

1. Basic ECG

The patient is positioned lying on their right hand side (in the case of some of our more severely ill patient this can be done in a sitting or standing position – though the results are often not as accurate). They then have a sticky ECG electrode pad attached to the central pad of each foot, these are held in place with a strip of tape (the tape is a special type that is easily removed with no trauma). The ECG machine is then attached to the pads via four leads and the patient must lie as still as possible whilst the recording takes place. The whole procedure is painless, and over within 10 – 15 minutes.

2. 24 Hour Holter Monitor

The holter monitor itself is approximately the size of an i-pod and it is placed in a case which is then attached to a harness worn by the patient. The ECG pads are glued using tissue glue (the same type that hospitals use for sealing scalp wounds etc.) to the patient's side over the heart, where if they have already had a heart scan they will already have a shaved patch. The leads of the holter monitor are then connected to the pads and the whole piece of equipment is covered up using a net stocking followed by an elasticated bandage to prevent damage or slippage. The patient then goes home wearing their monitor and carries on their normal daily routine. They then return 24 hours later to have the monitor removed. ECG pads are easily removed with a little surgical spirit, or if left will drop off of their own accord.

Although some animals find the experience strange initially we generally find that they adapt quickly and soon don't notice that they are wearing it.