

Understanding Canine CHF

- **Cause:** Usually a valvular disorder, common in older dogs.
- **Result:** Congestion and fluid retention in the lungs, making oxygen exchange difficult.
- **Early Signs:** Increased breathing rate/effort (even at rest), cough, exercise intolerance, lethargy, and weakness.
- **Severe Signs:** Sudden collapse or fainting (syncope).

Management and Monitoring

- **Treatment Goal:** Reduce excess fluid, increase heart contractility, and regulate blood pressure to reduce the heart's workload.
- **Medication:** Lifelong treatment is required to slow/prevent progression.
- **Common Medications:**
 - Furosemide (Lasix®), Pimobendan (Vetmedin®), Spironolactone and Benazepril (Cardalis®)
- **Monitoring:** Chest x-rays are recommended every **6-12 months** to check the heart and lungs for progression

Action Plan & Next Steps

- **Cough Improving:** Recheck in **1 month**.
- **Cough Not Improving (over the next week): Call the clinic.**
- **Cough Returns (once improved): Call the clinic** (as the Furosemide dosage may need to be increased).
- **Medication Refills:** Refill medications when the supply runs low.
- **Specialist Referral:** Consultation with a **cardiologist** is recommended.

Local Cardiology Specialists

Clinic Name	Location	Phone Number
Portland Veterinary Cardiology	Portland, OR	(503) 869-1136
Heart of Oregon Veterinary Cardiology	Portland, OR	(971) 727-3059
Cardiology Northwest	Tualatin, OR	(503) 246-9689
Pacific Northwest Pet ER and Specialty Center	Vancouver, WA	(360) 635-5302

