



## **BARRINGTON COAST VETS**

*Diamond Beach Veterinary Clinic*

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# **Heart Disease with Fluid in the Lungs (Pulmonary Oedema)**

## **What's Going On?**

Your pet has heart disease that is affecting the heart's ability to pump blood effectively. When the heart cannot pump strongly enough, blood backs up into the blood vessels in the lungs. This increased pressure allows fluid to leak into the lung tissue and air spaces. This condition is called pulmonary oedema, and it makes it harder for your pet to breathe.

## **What This Means for Your Pet**

- Breathing becomes more difficult because the lungs are partly filled with fluid instead of air.
- Oxygen levels drop, which can make your pet tired or weak.
- Without treatment, this can be life-threatening.

## **Treatment Plan**

Your pet will be managed with:

1. Diuretics – medication that helps remove excess fluid from the lungs by increasing urine output.
2. Heart medications – to help the heart pump more effectively and reduce strain.
3. Bronchodilator medication – helps open the airways, making breathing easier and improving oxygen flow.
4. Rest and stress reduction – calm, quiet environment to avoid extra strain on the heart.

## Ongoing Care at Home

- Give all medications exactly as prescribed – do not skip doses.
- Provide fresh water at all times – especially when on diuretics, as they increase urination.
- Feed a balanced diet – sometimes a low-sodium diet is recommended to reduce fluid retention.
- Keep activity light – avoid strenuous play, running, or jumping. Short, gentle walks are okay if your vet has approved them.
- Weigh your pet weekly – sudden weight gain may mean fluid is building up again.
- Monitor breathing rate at rest –
  - Normal: less than 30 breaths per minute
  - Concerning: over 30 breaths per minute at rest – call the clinic.

## When to Contact Us Immediately

Call Barrington Coast Vets right away if you notice:

- Breathing rate over 40 breaths per minute at rest
- Increased effort to breathe (stretching neck, open-mouth breathing, flaring nostrils)
- Weakness, collapse, or fainting
- Loss of appetite or extreme lethargy
- Persistent cough or worsening of cough
- Swollen abdomen

## Prognosis

Heart disease is usually manageable, not curable. With the right treatment, many pets can still enjoy a good quality of life.

Early detection of changes and prompt treatment adjustments are the best way to keep your pet comfortable.

We are here to help. If you have any concerns, call us on (02) 6559 2277.

Kind Regards,

The team at Barrington Coast Vets

## CLINIC HOURS

Monday	9am-4pm (by appointment)
Tuesday	9am-4pm (by appointment)
Wednesday	FARM RUN DAY (No vet in-clinic)
Thursday	9am-4pm (by appointment)
Friday	9am-4pm (by appointment)
Saturday	EMERGENCY ONLY
Sunday	EMERGENCY ONLY