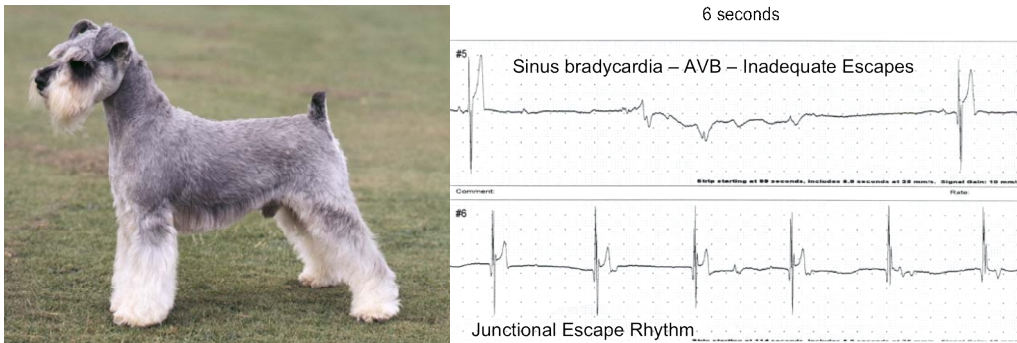


SICK SINUS SYNDROME



Sick sinus syndrome is a combination of a variety of electrical abnormalities that typically result in a heart rate that is too slow (sinus pauses, wandering pacemaker, atrioventricular block). Occasionally a pet will have a component of the syndrome that causes the heart rate to get too fast (“brady-tachy syndrome”). Miniature schnauzers and West Highland white terriers are overrepresented but it is certainly not limited to these two breeds. The symptoms of sick sinus syndrome include decreased exercise tolerance and fainting episodes. The therapy for sick sinus syndrome is to place a permanent pacemaker (see pacemaker implantation). If pacemaker implantation is not an option, medical management can be attempted but it is often not as successful as pacemaker implantation.