

SUPRAVENTRICULAR TACHYCARDIA (SVT)



Supraventricular arrhythmias are abnormal beats that arise from the atria (the filling chambers of the heart). Three or more of these abnormal beats in a row is considered supraventricular tachycardia. Supraventricular tachycardia is often caused by underlying heart disease but sometimes can be related to disease processes of other organs. Occasionally the underlying cause of the arrhythmia cannot be determined. Supraventricular arrhythmias are managed medically. Sometimes this includes an acute period of hospitalization with intravenous medication but in general includes oral antiarrhythmic therapy at home. The arrhythmias are frequently monitored with Holter monitors (24 ECG monitoring). Most dogs respond to anti-arrhythmic therapy; however, some patients are difficult to control and require multiple medication changes before good rhythm control is achieved. Untreated, SVT can cause profound myocardial systolic failure (pump failure) which can result in congestive heart failure.