



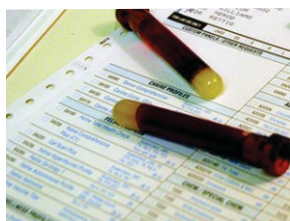
Routine Test for Older Hounds

Our older dogs are excellent companions and the bond that makes them so dear to us increases with the years. The wolfhounds that share our lives from a young age are simply extraordinary and so precious. We all want to keep them in excellent health for as long as possible. Annual or biennial testing at the veterinarian can often detect the onset of health problems even before the obvious symptoms.

A dog is considered a senior from the third part of his life, as young as 4 or 5 years old for a wolfhound. However, your dog's signs of slowing down should not be interpreted as an inevitable fact of aging. It can hide something that a detailed physical examination by the veterinarian and a series of tests (blood, urine, chest x-ray, etc.) could detect.

With the help of your veterinarian, you can tailor a dog-friendly testing program, medical history, and hereditary family history.

Blood Test



The blood tests evaluates three types of cells in the blood; red cells, white cells and platelets. The red cells carry oxygen in all organs and tissues, the white cells fight infections and carry antibodies and platelets vital for coagulation.

A small amount of red cells can point to anaemia, blood effusion, or internal damage that consumes the red cells. Too much may indicate dehydration. A high hematocrit (the proportion

of red blood cells in the blood) is often reported in several breeds of sightounds as well as in dogs living at high altitude.

An abnormal white cell or leukocyte count may indicate the presence of infection, inflammation, or other stress. Normal values of white cell count reported in Irish Wolfhounds are frequently near the lower values of normal.

A low platelet count may be an indicator of immune system deficiency, vitamin B12 deficiency, or dehydration.

Blood work also measures weight, size, concentration, and different types of cells, all of which play a specific role in maintaining health.

Biochemistry of the Blood

This generic term refers to a series of tests measuring a more or less important series of parameters including from the outset, the measurement of liver enzymes and renal function. Other measurements reflect the functions of the pancreas, spleen or electrolytes such as calcium, potassium, phosphorus, minerals etc.

Hormonal Measures

Cortisol can be used to diagnose Addison's disease or Cushing's disease.

The thyroid gland produces thyroid hormones that play a vital role in regulating the metabolism and the proper functioning of the body. Tests of the thyroid gland usually begin with the measurement of the hormone T4. If the test is abnormal, it is followed by T3 and TSH tests. Hyper and hypothyroidism are unbalances of the gland that no longer produces the optimal

amount of hormones. It is a fairly common condition in old dogs that can easily be confused with the manifestations of aging. These changes are sometimes subtle. Dogs are lethargic, overweight, their hair is dull and less dense, they are chilly and they have less good appetite. It is an easy condition to treat and the dog regains his energy, his appetite and his beautiful fur.

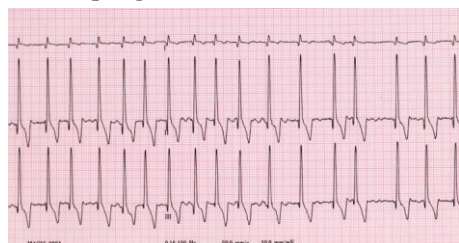
Wolfhounds, like most sighthounds, have an average optimal level of thyroid hormones lower than most other dog breeds.

Urine Test

The urine test is a good marker for a multitude of health conditions. If the collection was made under sterile conditions, urinary tract infections will be more easily associated with specific bacteria or bacteria and determine the most appropriate antibiotics. The urine test can also be an excellent indicator of diabetes or an early marker of diseases of the kidneys, prostate, bladder or different types of bladder stones.

Chest X-Rays

If your dog does not run as before, he may have trouble catching his breath. A chest X-ray allows your veterinarian to assess the heart and lungs as well as part of the spine, trachea and esophagus.



If heart disease is detected, additional tests such as electrocardiogram or ultrasound may be required. Other tests and tools are also available such

as the Holter or the Heart2Heart applications.

The Holter, a Mobile Heart Monitor

In 1961, following the sudden death of a friend, an American physicist by the name of Norman J. Holter developed a mobile recorder of cardiac activity, a continuous electrocardiogram, to detect electrical abnormalities of the heart and thus participate to save lives. The first monitors, named after its inventor, were big and bulky but the digital



recording technology has reduced the device to the size of a lighter. Several decades of clinical experience in humans and dogs have made it an inexpensive and highly effective tool for the accurate diagnosis and treatment of cardiac

abnormalities.

This non-invasive method continuously records the frequency and heart rate for a period of 24 to 48 hours. The electrocardiogram performed in the clinic, also an excellent test, and records during 2 minutes the equivalent of some 200 heart beats. Since a dog's heart beats an average of 150,000 times during one day, the ECG detects only 1 tenth of 1% of electrical activity, thus reducing the chances of detecting an

intermittent anomaly such as tachycardia. Along with the Holter recording, the owner keeps a log of the dog's physical activity as long as he is wearing the monitor. This eliminates the contribution of stress recorded during the visit to the veterinarian and allows a complete picture of the response of the heart during walking, meals, sleep and play.

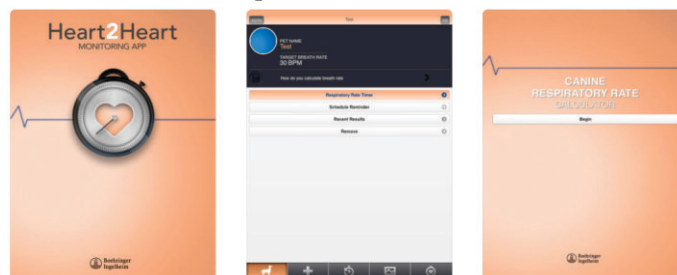
The monitor can measure the variability of the heartbeat depending on the activity or rest; it determines the type of arrhythmia and complexity of irregular rhythm, the need for medication and finally the response to antiarrhythmic treatment.

When ECG detects advanced cardiomyopathy, the rhythm is very fast and very irregular. The treatment strategy aims to control the frequency rather than the heart rate. Since the heartbeat is much slower at home, the goal or response to medical treatment should lead us to less than 140 beats per minute for 90% of the Holter monitor's recording time.

Holter examination is a more comprehensive technique for exploring cardiac electrical phenomena than point electrocardiography, since it allows for much more in-depth study over 24 hours or more. Its practical realization is simple and accessible.

The “Heart2Heart” Applications

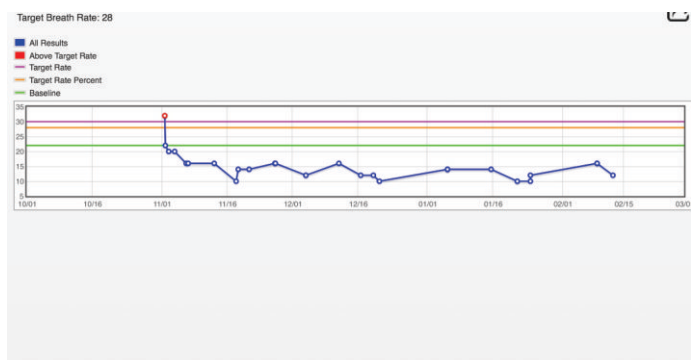
One consequence of the weakening of the heart in dogs suffering from dilated cardiomyopathy is the accumulation of fluids in the lungs. To counter this phenomenon, veterinarians usually prescribe diuretics. Since these drugs can lead to dehydration or decreased electrolytes and potassium, the presence of pulmonary edema should be checked. An X-ray of the thorax makes it possible to visualize it.



A smartphone or tablet app called “Heart2Heart” allows the dog owner to anticipate the problem before it can be detected by X-ray. The application makes it possible to measure the respiratory rate of the dog at rest and by measuring at regular

13:08 Sam, 16 Feb
 Choose Pet
 Pet Name
 Target Breath Rate
 30 BPM
 Count the number of breaths your pet takes in 30 seconds. [How to calculate breath rate.](#)
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 Number Of Breaths
 Comment
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intervals, noting any upward trend. Your veterinarian will tell you the target respiratory rate. We must not panic for a measure higher than the previous ones; they can sometimes result from a particularly interesting dream. This is why, an

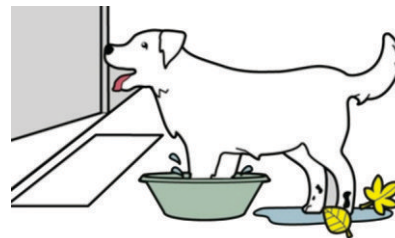


abnormal measurement must be re-taken a few hours later and the trend takes shape with one or two measurements per week. This data can be routed to your veterinarian easily and directly via the app.

The Benefits of a Medical Monitoring Program for Seniors

- Early detection of health problems allows for a quick response and a better treatment plan.
- Annual blood tests improve safety during anaesthesia (choice of drugs, monitoring, etc.).
- Annual tests increase safety when administering drugs, by screening for concomitant diseases.
- Sometimes, a simple change in the diet can solve a health problem before it degenerates.

Finally, a series of normal tests will help you detect any changes in the future and they will brighten your day!



Tid Bit for Dog Owners

Beds and Bedding

Choose a bed with a removable fabric cover. Vacuum the bed to remove hair, dirt, and other debris. Follow up with a lint roller to pull away any hair the vacuum may have left behind. Wash the cover (if it's machine washable) in cold water using a mild laundry detergent. Add a cup of baking soda to help neutralize odour. Dry (in the clothes dryer) for about 20 minutes. Use at least one pet-safe dryer sheet; this will reduce static and remove more pet hair. Finish by line drying to avoid shrinkage.

Collar Cleaning

Put a couple of squirts of dog shampoo in a bowl and fill with hot water. Let soak for about 15 minutes. Rub the collar against itself to extract any ground-in dirt. Rinse the collar under running water, use a towel to remove excess water and hang to dry.

Dog Hair

To remove pet hair from furniture drapes, or other fabric-covered items, use rubber gloves. Slightly dampen a glove on your hand and sweep the fabric with it. Hair will ball up and be easy to pick up. Wash and dry gloves between uses.

Lavender Oil

Not only is lavender essential oil soothing to the central nervous system, but also when applied regularly between your dog's shoulder blades, it can keep fleas and ticks at bay. Try a lavender room mist in your car to keep your dog calm and your automobile smelling fresh after a day outing with your pooch.

Muddy Paws

Spring rain means muddy paws, but a little prevention can keep your dog from tracking dirt inside the house. First, trim the hair around your dogs paws regularly — mud won't clump to his feet when the hair is kept short. On days that you can't avoid a little mud, keep a bucket of warm water and a towel near the door. Before you come inside, remove dirt by dipping each paw in the water and gently wiping it with the towel.

Quick Bath

Over-bathing can cause dry skin, which results in itching and flaking. Avoid these issues by giving a quick dry bath. First brush out the coat to loosen dead hair, dirt, and debris. Wipe down with a towel spritzed with a solution of half apple cider vinegar and half water. Follow up by sprinkling and rubbing in baking soda in his coat, this will neutralize the smell of the vinegar. Let it sit for a minute or two, and then brush it off. Tip: Give dry baths outdoors, or another place where a little mess doesn't matter!

Toys

Wash dog toys to keep them germ-free and in good shape. For soft toys, pop them in the washing machine, ideally in a garment bag. (Be sure to use dog-safe detergent.) Line dry or put them in the dryer inside a pillowcase. Hard toys can be cleaned in the sink with a solution of 50% water and 50% vinegar and a brush or sponge. An easy alternative: Put your pal's toys in the dishwasher with her bowls.

Urine

Even if you can't smell traces of urine, your dog can. It's important to clean and neutralize these odours, because as long as he can smell it, he'll continue to use that area as his personal potty. For new stains, soak up as much as you can by layering newspaper on top of paper towels and standing on the padding. Repeat this step until the area is no longer damp. Follow up by rinsing the soiled area with water. Once the area is clean, use an enzyme-based pet odour neutralizer.