Should I give medication on the morning of the appointment?

Yes. please give medication as prescribed by your vet unless I have specifically advised your vet otherwise.

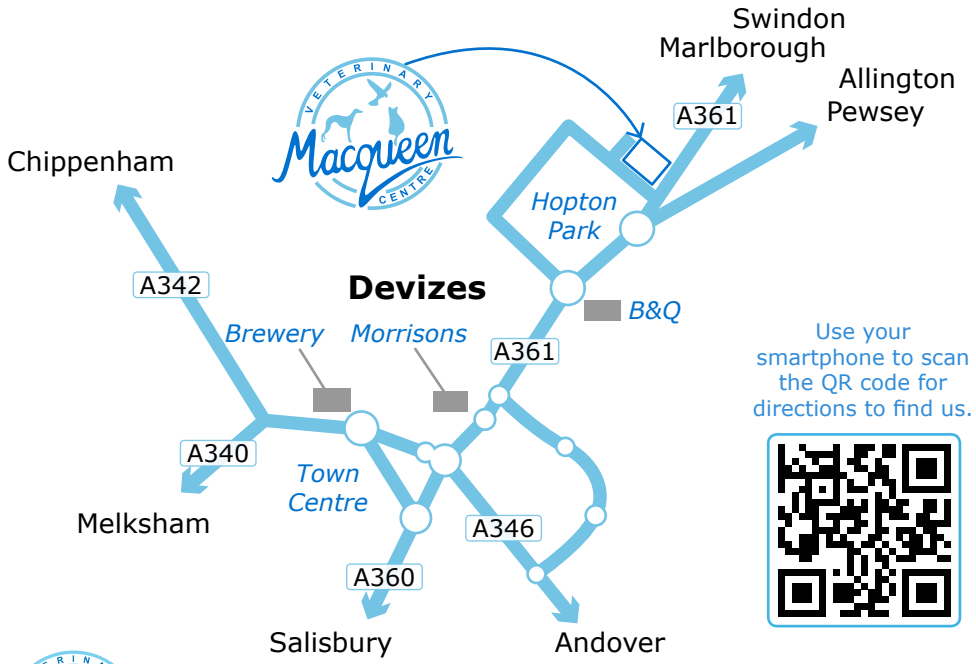
Will my pet have hair clipped?

Yes. Hair clipping is usually necessary, although for cardiac ultrasound scans this is usually minimal.

Can I stay with my pet during the diagnostic tests?

In most cases I advise against this because many patients tend to be more anxious if their owners are in the room when they are gently restrained for ultrasound. However, if patients are particularly nervous, or suffer from severe separation anxiety, then we can arrange for you to be present for cardiac ultrasound. We look forward to seeing you and your pet and will endeavour to make it as stress-free and comfortable as possible.

If you have any questions beforehand, please call us on **01380 728505** and we will be happy to help.



Use your smartphone to scan the QR code for directions to find us.

The Hospital, 1 Waller Road, Hopton Park, Devizes SN10 2GH
www.macqueenvets.com | mail@macqueenvets.com
24hr Emergency Service: 01380 728505

Cardiology Referrals

Andrew Francis BVSc, CertVC, DipECVIM-CA (Cardiology), MRCVS.
European and RCVS recognised Specialist in Veterinary Cardiology.

A bit about me

I graduated from Bristol University Veterinary School in 2002. After spending 4 years in general practice I completed my Specialist training at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, University of Edinburgh.

South Coast Cardiology

I was Head of Cardiology at Anderson Moores Veterinary Specialists for two years and I now run South Coast Cardiology, a visiting specialist referral service.

Specialist Qualifications

I hold the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) certificate in Veterinary Cardiology as well as the European Diploma in Small Animal Cardiology. I am recognised by the RCVS as a Specialist in Veterinary Cardiology and by the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS) as a Specialist in Small Animal Cardiology.

This means that I am the veterinary equivalent of a Consultant Cardiologist in human medicine. My skills and knowledge are re-tested every 5 years to make sure I remain qualified to be called a Specialist.

Clinical problems that I can help your vet to investigate and manage include:

- Heart murmurs
- Congenital cardiac disease
- Poor exercise tolerance
- Breathing Problems
- Arrhythmias
- Collapse/syncope
- Coughing
- Pulmonary Hypertension

What will happen during my visit to Macqueen Veterinary Centre?

Consultations are booked in for the morning and usually last for about 30 minutes. In most cases any diagnostic tests are performed the same day and your pet will usually be ready to go home again in the afternoon. If your pet is very unwell then it may be necessary to keep them in the hospital overnight.

Prior to the consultation, I will review the clinical history provided by your vet. During the consultation I will sit down with you to understand the clinical concerns you have regarding your pet. I will examine your pet and then discuss options for investigation, possible diagnoses, and potential treatment options.

What about costs?

I will discuss all the cost implications of the recommended diagnostic and treatment options with you in detail during the consultation.

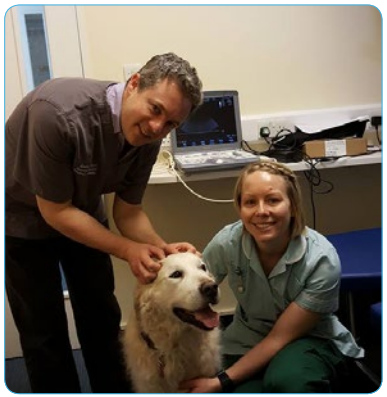
Mitral Valve Disease and Dilated Cardiomyopathy Screening

The last 3 years has been a very exciting time for Veterinary Cardiology, with the publication of two pivotal studies that have fundamentally changed the way that we manage the two most common cardiac diseases affecting adult dogs, mitral valve disease (MVD), and dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM).

We used to wait until the last stages of both diseases before recommending medical treatment. However, the results of these studies have proven that medical management in the earliest stages of these diseases significantly prolongs the survival time of your pet.

If your vet suspects that your pet might have mitral valve disease or dilated cardiomyopathy I can diagnose the earliest stages of both diseases using heart ultrasound so that your pet can benefit from treatment at the earliest opportunity.

What diagnostic tests might be required?



Most patients will require an ultrasound scan of the heart. Some patients will need to have the electrical activity of their heart recorded (ECG). Sometimes it is also necessary to perform various blood tests and if your pet has been collapsing then they may go home wearing a 24-hour Holter ECG monitor. All these tests are non-invasive and sedation is very rarely required.

If your pet has clinical signs consistent with heart failure the I may need to take chest X-rays. Most patients require light sedation for X-rays because it is very important that they lie as still as possible.

Discharge Appointments

Most patients are ready to go home the same day. Discharge appointments are usually booked in from 15:00 onwards. I will discuss the results of any diagnostic tests with you in person. We will agree a treatment plan for your pet if required and I will give you as much prognostic information as I can. I will update you with the results of any outstanding diagnostic tests as they become available.

Continuity of Care

Continuity of clinical care is a very important part of the service that we offer at South Coast Cardiology. I will work closely with your own vet to provide the best possible clinical care for your pet.

- Your vet will receive a detailed clinical report after your clinic visit.
- Follow-up referral appointments will always be with me.
- Your pet remains under the care of your own vet, while I support the clinical team at your practice with Specialist advice as needed.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I need to starve my pet before the appointment?

Yes. It is best not to give them breakfast on the morning of the appointment, unless a small amount of food is needed with medication. Water can be offered as normal. Although many of our patients do not require any sedation, feeding may also interfere with blood test results so is best avoided.