

CLIENT INFORMATION SHEET – CT & MRI

Computed tomography (CT) provides a non-invasive way of rapidly imaging bony structures and large regions of the body in great detail. It uses conventional x-rays to image the patient in two dimensional 'slices', a little like a loaf of bread. The slices are put together by a computer to create a three dimensional image that can be manipulated to provide a large amount of information about the patient which cannot be obtained by any other method. CT is very quick so the examination time is short, however it is necessary that the patient remain still during the procedure so a brief period of general anaesthesia is required.

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) uses a magnetic field and radiofrequency waves to examine the soft tissues of the nervous system (the brain and spinal cord). It is very safe – no ionizing radiation is used. Because of the outstanding soft tissue contrast resolution produced, MRI can sometimes provide much more detail about disease in these regions than a CT scan can, however it takes longer to perform an MRI (usually about an hour) - general anaesthesia is essential.

In some cases we will be requested to obtain a sample of cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) at the conclusion of the study (while the pet is still under general anaesthesia) to further assist with the diagnosis.

You will need to have an appointment for your pet to have a CT or MRI performed – this will usually be made after consultation between your veterinarian and a radiologist so that the appropriate examination can be ordered. Your pet will be admitted to hospital the morning of the procedure, and may need to stay for a few hours or the whole day.

To prepare your pet for their CT or MRI examination, please do not feed them after 8 pm the night before the procedure. It is important that your pet is fasted for general anaesthesia. Water is permitted. The medications used for sedation or anaesthesia are very safe and tailored to your pet – your veterinarian will inform us if there are any concerns, and a specialist veterinary anaesthetist is available for difficult cases.

Following the examination the radiologist will contact your veterinarian to discuss the findings; a written report will also be emailed, faxed or sent to your veterinarian. When your pet is discharged, you will be given a brief indication of the findings, but we ask that you visit or contact your veterinarian to fully discuss the findings from the study and any further recommendations as they relate to the clinical problem of your pet.

The Veterinary Imaging Centre (ph: 9204 0400) is located at 305 Selby St Osborne Park, within Perth Veterinary Specialists. The practice is close to Scarborough Beach Road and there are many local coffee shops and interesting browsing opportunities if you would like to fill in time while your pet is being examined (the radiologist will let you know how long the procedure will be expected to take when they admit your pet). Please leave a mobile phone number with the receptionist in case we need to contact you.

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