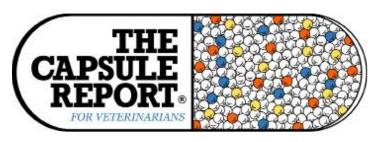
"Pearls"
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Veterinary Medicine



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AT A GLANCE

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Cardiology

Chagas and HRV (Heart Rate Variability)

A study of 112 dogs with Chagas disease (Trypanosoma cruzi) found heart rate variability (HRV) disruptions in 63% and ECG abnormalities in 98% of cases—including asymptomatic dogs-demonstrating widespread cardiac and autonomic dysfunction. Symptomatic dogs had more arrhythmias. HRV monitoring with a 24-hour Holter can detect abnormalities before clinical signs appear, supporting its value for early diagnosis and better management, especially since many cases are missed. Chagas disease is a significant, underdiagnosed "One Health" concern in the US, affecting up to 18% of dogs in the South. Veterinarians should proactively screen at-risk dogs (using IFA or ELISA serology), including those with unexplained heart disease. Kissing bugs (*Triatoma spp*) can infest any home, regardless of socioeconomic status, and dogs can act as sentinels for human infection.

See Cap Rep (May 2025).43(7):2 for a review of Chagas Disease in Dogs

Madigan, R. et al. JAVMA 263(7), 888-895 <u>Veterinary Vertex podcast</u> Cap Rep (2025).43(8):1

Critical Care - Surgery - Nursing

Feeding tube placement and care

This <u>article</u> provides an excellent, comprehensive resource to consult before placing a feeding tube or when encountering issues such as clogging, accidental removal, or infection. Key tips highlighted by the author include:

Use 0 Prolene suture, which is durable against sharp toenails.

Consider using the <u>Miracle Nipple O-ring Syringe</u>, which tolerates frequent use and is also ideal for feeding orphaned animals.

Protect and cover e-tubes with a Kitty Kollar.

Maintain stoma site hygiene by cleaning with a dilute bleach solution (1/4 teaspoon bleach in 1/2 cup water, yielding a 0.008% solution) for five minutes twice daily.

When declogging tubes, only use a 60 ml syringe to avoid excessive pressure [ref]; also consider using Avanos Clog Zapper, a papain and pancreatic enzyme mixture.

Prevent feeding tube clogs by flushing with 10–15 ml of water before and after feeding or administering medications, and use at least 5 ml of water between each medication.

Wash all equipment used to make the slurry after each use with warm soapy water. Sanitize items by soaking them in a solution made from 2 gallons of water and 2 tablespoons (30 mL) of chlorine bleach for 2 minutes. After soaking, remove the items and let them air dry; do not use a towel to dry them.



🗓 SCAN ME

Additionally, a <u>summary sheet</u> is available for determining the correct viscosity of feeding slurries (target level 2–3). A <u>video</u> demonstration of the procedure is available (see minutes 18–19), which shows that achieving a level 2 flow corresponds to 4–8 ml of slurry remaining in a 10 ml syringe after 10 seconds of dripping. Detailed instructions for measuring food and liquid consistency are available <u>here</u>.

Tolbert, MK. et al. TVP (2025); 15(4):30-36 Cap Rep (2025).43(8):1

The Capsule Report Volume 43 Number 9

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July 2025

The Capsule Report is published monthly for active people interested in current topics & trends in veterinary medicine.

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