San Carlos Veterinary Hospital

SCVH NEWS

A Pet DRx Hospital

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SAN CARLOS VETERINARY HOSPITAL HAS BROKEN THE ULTRASOUND BARRIER

Picture this! San Carlos Veterinary Hospital has added a huge diagnostic punch to its regimen. In April of 1999, we purchased the 400L ultrasound machine made by Toshiba. It has given us the capability of imaging many organs of the body in a safe and noninvasive manner. Recently we replaced that machine with a Biosound Megas unit with a special linear probe for orthopedics, as well as Doppler mode for cardiac and vascular evaluations.

Ultrasound works on the principle of high frequency sound waves that bounce off (echo from) different parts of the body, creating an image of the inside of the part on a cathode ray screen. Whereas X-ray can only give an outline of a structure, ultrasound can actually look inside most structures.

Organs are classified in ultrasonography according to their "echogencity" - the degree to which they return an echo. Anechoic ("without an echo") structures appear very dark on the screen. Typically these are structures with a high fluid content. Hyperechoic ("excessive echo") structures will appear very bright on the screen; these structures typically have low fluid content.

One must be able to recognize the normal appearance of the different organs of the body in order to diagnose pathological changes. It takes several years of training and practice to become proficient in ultrasound and echo-cardiography. Members of the SCVH staff will be taking courses in these fields over the next two years and on a yearly basis thereafter.