

Dog's Sinus Arrhythmia Heart Rhythm Is Normal

When a dog breathes in, his heart rate increases; it slows when he breathes out.

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Q. My 1-year-old American Pit Bull Terrier has an odd heart rhythm. It goes thump... thump, thump, thump...thump. I am so very worried. What should I do?

A. You have done an excellent job of recording your dog's heart rhythm. Your description of the thumping almost perfectly describes a sinus arrhythmia, a normal heart rhythm which can sound alarming at first. During sinus arrhythmia, the heart rate increases when your dog breathes in, and then slows down while he is breathing out. As long as this variation is regular, it is completely normal. You may want to listen a little longer to make sure this is true.

Did you know that an EKG (heart rhythm test) will change if there is another heart within 10 inches of the one being measured? The energy put out by one heart will affect the energy of the other heart. This is the reason you should hug your loved ones often, human or dog. Let them feel your love.