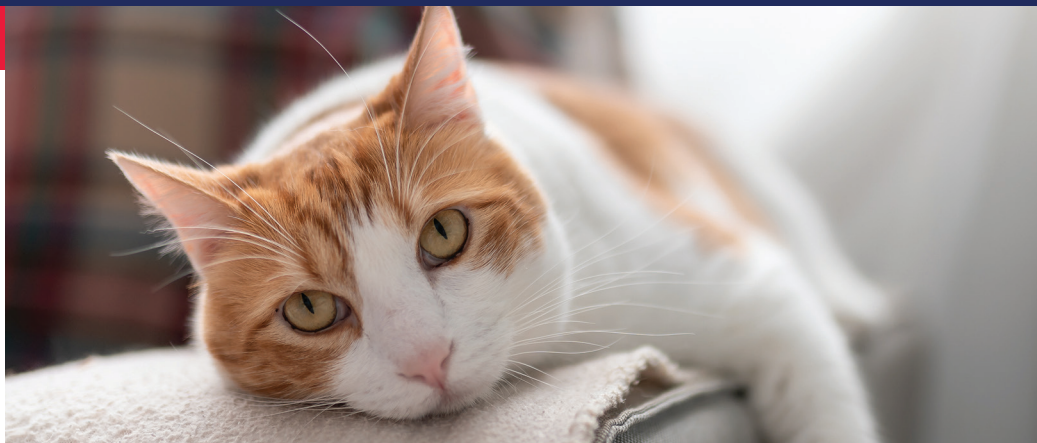




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What a Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy Diagnosis Means for Your Cat

“If your veterinarian detects a heart murmur or abnormal rhythm in your cat, they are likely to recommend thoracic radiographs (ie, chest X-rays).

Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM) is the most commonly diagnosed heart disease in cats, potentially affecting $\leq 15\%$ of the feline population.¹ The condition can affect cats as young as 3 months of age, highlighting the importance of routine veterinary visits throughout a cat's life for preventive care and wellness examinations. The most common way for HCM to be diagnosed in cats that appear healthy is by a veterinarian detecting either an abnormal heart sound (ie, heart murmur) or a change in the heart's rhythm during a routine wellness examination.

Find out what it means if your cat has HCM and what your options are for managing and monitoring your cat's heart health.

What Is Feline Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy?

When a cat has HCM, the muscle of the heart's left ventricle, which is the heart chamber responsible for pumping blood to the rest of the body, becomes thickened. Because of the muscle thickening, blood flow to the heart's muscle cells is compromised. As these cells die, they are replaced by fibrous tissue, which impacts the heart's ability to beat effectively. For most cats, the exact cause of HCM is not known, although a genetic mutation has been identified in Maine coons and ragdolls.¹

How Is Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy Diagnosed?

If your veterinarian detects a heart murmur or abnormal rhythm in your cat, they are likely to recommend thoracic radiographs (ie, chest X-rays), which may or may not show heart enlargement. The diagnostic test of choice to diagnose HCM is echocardiogram, which is an examination of the heart performed using ultrasonography.³ This test is most often performed by board-certified veterinary cardiologists, so your veterinarian may refer you to a specialist if one is available in your area. Your veterinarian may also recommend a blood test called feline-specific NT-proBNP, which measures a hormone that is released in response to heart stress. Other conditions that can cause thickening of the left ventricle such as hyperthyroidism or high blood pressure must be ruled out for a diagnosis of HCM to be made.¹

How Is Feline Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy Treated?

Some cats with HCM will have stable disease that does not cause symptoms (ie, subclinical HCM) and that progresses little without treatment. However, in some cats, the left atrium of the heart, which is the chamber that receives oxygenated blood from the lungs, may become enlarged. These cats may develop heart failure and/or blood clots.

Treatment options differ between cats with subclinical HCM and cats that have developed symptoms associated with heart failure or blood clots.

Subclinical Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy

Cats with subclinical HCM should be monitored every 6 to 12 months, ideally by a veterinary cardiologist.

As of August 2025, Felycin®-CA1 (sirolimus delayed-release tablets) is available to treat cats with HCM that have not yet developed symptoms. Felycin®-CA1 given by mouth once weekly can help prevent or delay progression of HCM in cats that are not showing symptoms of heart failure.^{2,4} This medication should not be used in cats with diabetes or liver disease.⁴

In cats at risk for developing blood clots, anticoagulating medications like clopidogrel may be considered.³

Consider speaking with your veterinarian about ways to reduce your cat's stress, such as with antianxiety medications, prior to veterinary visits.³

Symptomatic Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy

Many cats with HCM will never show symptoms. Unfortunately,

“Regular wellness visits may allow your veterinarian to detect heart disease before your cat develops symptoms.”

nearly 24% of cats with HCM progress to develop congestive heart failure (CHF), and ~11% will develop life-threatening blood clots.² Cats with CHF can develop fluid in and around their lungs. Felycin®-CA1 is not intended for cats experiencing heart failure. These patients may require:

- Placement in an oxygen chamber
- Diuretics like furosemide to remove fluid
- Anxiety-reducing medications
- Removal of fluid from the chest via needle
- Anticlotting medications like clopidogrel
- Medications like pimobendan to improve heart function

Cats with chronic CHF should be reexamined by their veterinarian every 2 to 4 months.³

Cats with blood clots can develop saddle thrombus, which can cause sudden paralysis in one or both back legs due to a blockage of blood flow to the hind end. Sadly, treatment is unsuccessful in many cats, but appropriate pain medications are essential, and anticoagulating medications can help in some cases.³ If you are concerned that your cat may be experiencing saddle thrombus, take your cat to your veterinarian or the emergency veterinary hospital as soon as possible.

Conclusion

Regular wellness visits may allow your veterinarian to detect heart disease before your cat develops symptoms. Cats that have subclinical HCM have a better long-term outlook, as well as the option to receive Felycin®-CA1 to slow or halt progression of their heart disease. Follow up with your veterinarian if you have any questions or concerns about your cat's HCM diagnosis.

References

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2. Kaplan JL, Rivas VN, Walker AL, et al. Delayed-release rapamycin halts progression of left ventricular hypertrophy in subclinical feline hypertrophic cardiomyopathy: results of the RAPACAT trial. *J Am Vet Med Assoc.* 2023;261(11):1628-1637. doi:10.2460/javma.23.04.0187
3. Luis Fuentes V, Abbott J, Chetboul V, et al. ACVIM consensus statement guidelines for the classification, diagnosis, and management of cardiomyopathies in cats. *J Vet Intern Med.* 2020;34(3):1062-1077. doi:10.1111/jvim.15745
4. PRN® Pharmacal. Felycin®-CA1 (sirolimus delayed-release tablets). Prescribing information.

FELYCIN®-CA1 (sirolimus delayed-release tablets)

Cardiac drug for oral use in cats only.

Conditionally approved by FDA pending a full demonstration of effectiveness under application number 141-604. It is a violation of federal law to use this product other than as directed in the labeling. For complete prescribing information, see full package insert. **Caution:** Federal law restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian. **Indication:** for the management of ventricular hypertrophy in cats with subclinical hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM). **Dosage and Administration:** Administer Felycin-CA1 at a target dose of 0.3 mg/kg orally once weekly. Tablets should be swallowed whole and not chewed. Do not split or crush tablets. Felycin-CA1 should be administered with a meal. Cats weighing less than 2.5 kg cannot be accurately dosed. **Contraindications:** Felycin-CA1 should not be used in cats with diabetes mellitus. Discontinue immediately if a cat receiving Felycin-CA1 is diagnosed with diabetes mellitus. The administration of Felycin-CA1 to a cat that developed diabetes mellitus was associated with the development of diabetic ketoacidosis and death. Do not administer in cats with pre-existing liver disease. **User Safety Warnings:** Not for human use. Keep out of reach of children. Contact a physician in case of accidental ingestion by humans. Pregnant and breastfeeding women should avoid contact with Felycin-CA1. People with known hypersensitivity to sirolimus should administer Felycin-CA1 with caution. **Animal Safety Warnings:** Administration of Felycin-CA1 with drugs that inhibit cytochrome P-450 3A4 or P-glycoprotein, such as calcium channel blockers, amiodarone, azoles, or cyclosporine, may increase risk for toxicity. Use caution when administering in cats with the MDR1 mutation or when administering concomitantly with another P-gp substrate. Treatment with Felycin-CA1 could impact the cat's ability to mount an adequate immune response to vaccinations. Concurrent administration of Felycin-CA1 did not impact the cat's ability to mount an adequate immune response to a killed rabies vaccine. The impact of Felycin-CA1 for FHV-1, FCV, FPV, and FeLV has not been evaluated. Keep Felycin-CA1 in a secure location out of reach of dogs, cats, and other animals to prevent accidental ingestion or overdose. **Precautions:** For use only in otherwise healthy cats with subclinical HCM in the absence of other causes of compensatory myocardial hypertrophy (e.g. systemic hypertension), current or historic symptoms of congestive heart failure, arterial thromboembolism, and severe LV outflow tract obstruction. Treatment with Felycin-CA1 has been associated with the elevation of the transaminase enzymes, which include alanine aminotransferase (ALT) and aspartate aminotransferase (AST). The use of Felycin-CA1 in cats with viral disease like feline viral rhinotracheitis has not been evaluated. The safety and effectiveness of Felycin-CA1 has not been evaluated in cats with other cardiomyopathy phenotypes, in cats receiving beta blockers or corticosteroids, in cats with kidney disease, hyperthyroidism, or other significant systemic disease. The effectiveness of Felycin-CA1 has not been evaluated in sexually intact cats, therefore, should not be used in animals intended for breeding. **Adverse Reactions:** In a well-controlled pilot field study, 43 cats with subclinical HCM were administered either the label dose of Felycin-CA1 (0.3 mg/kg once weekly), twice the label dose (0.6 mg/kg once weekly), or a placebo control tablet and followed for 180 days or until removal from the study. The most frequently observed adverse reactions were cardiovascular in nature, relating to the progression of HCM, and included arrhythmia, congestive heart failure, syncope, and pericardial effusion. Other adverse reactions were lethargy, vomiting, diarrhea, and inappetence. **Clinical Pharmacology:** Sirolimus is an immunosuppressant that targets and inhibits the mammalian target of rapamycin C1 (mTORC1) protein complex, a central regulator of cell growth and nutrient response. Studies in rodent models suggest mTOR inhibition by sirolimus attenuates cardiac hypertrophy by promoting autophagy, attenuating oxidative stress and blocking proinflammatory responses, thereby resulting in an improvement in cardiac function in rodents. **Reasonable Expectation of Effectiveness:** This product is conditionally approved by FDA pending a full demonstration of effectiveness. **To obtain full product information for Felycin-CA1 please call 1-800-874-9764.**

Manufactured for: PRN™ Pharmacal, Pensacola, FL 32514

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Dosage and Administration: For use in cats only. The total recommended dosage for Felycin-CA1 is 0.3 mg/kg once per week, dosed in conjunction with a meal. **Storage:** Store at 20-25°C (68-77°F). **WARNINGS: NOT FOR USE IN HUMANS. KEEP THIS AND ALL DRUGS OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN.**
