



## SLEEPING RESPIRATORY RATES

Sleeping Respiratory Rate (SPR) is a subtle and sensitive indicator of changes in your pet's condition. Increase in respiratory rate and effort while sleeping should be reported immediately.

Usually sleeping respirations are approximately 28-30 breaths per minute or less. If your pet is sleeping soundly, they may take as few as 18 or 20 breaths per minute. This is completely normal.

We ask you to monitor the sleeping respiratory rate because we want to know if it goes above 30, especially if there seems to be an upward trend. The point here is to catch the change in sleeping respiratory rate before it is 40 or 50 and a real emergency.

It is important to note that a small increase in the sleeping respiratory rate may not be accompanied by any other change such as an increased effort to breathe, or excessive panting, coughing, or restlessness. Excessive panting, increased effort, coughing, or restlessness are important to note but it is likely that once you see these signs, the sleeping respiratory rate will already have been elevated.

Changes like the ones mentioned above are important to note and seek veterinary care.

### Why we ask you to count the Sleeping Respiratory Rate:

Your pet has a heart condition. At some point this condition will progress. The sleeping respiratory rate is a very subtle indicator of changes in your pet's heart condition. Monitoring it on a regular basis will help avoid a health crisis.

Think of the sleeping respiratory rate like a warning light on your dashboard. A warning light on your dashboard is not usually an emergency but if you ignore it long enough, it will become an expensive repair. In the same way, not monitoring the sleeping respiratory rate means you may not see the warning light and your pet will be sicker when the changes are found and addressed.

An example: say your pet's sleeping respiratory rate is 24, that means in 20 seconds you'll count 12 breaths. Let's now say that your pet's sleeping respiratory rate increases to 34, that means you'll count 17 breaths in 30 seconds. The difference between the two is only 5—a hard thing to notice if you're not actually counting breaths.

#### How to count the respiratory rate:

Count the respirations by watching your pet's chest go up and down. Each time the chest goes up is a "1" (one inhalation or breath). Using a clock or watch with a secondhand, count the number of inhalation for 15 seconds and multiply by 4 to get the rate for one minute.

Counting the sleeping respiratory rate simply means to count the respiratory rate (the number of inhalations/ breaths in 15 seconds) when your pet is SOUND asleep. Please record once to twice daily. Please report back to your veterinarian in 3-5 days with these recorded rates so they can get a baseline. You will continue to do this every day once daily and more frequently if you are concerned that the rate may be increased.