To perform a VHS –

1. Take a lateral view of the dog’s heart.
2. Measure the long axis, the length from base (ventral margin of the corina) to apex (L), and the short axis, width of the heart perpendicular to the length measurement, typically at the ventral margin of the caudal vena cava(S).
3. Take these dimensions and scale them against the length of the vertebrae dorsal to the heart, beginning with the fourth vertebral body on the spine (T4).
4. Count how many vertebral bodies the length (L) of the heart is and how many bodies can be included in the width (S) measurement. A vertebral body consists of the vertebral body starting at the cranial end-plate and includes the disc space immediately caudal to the that vertebrae.
5. If the sum of these two measurements is higher than 10.5, the dog probably has an enlarged heart. Normal dogs tend to fall within a range of 8.4 to 10.5.