

## TELEMEDICINE

Telemedicine at its simplest is merely a telephone conversation between a veterinarian and a specialist. Now, with improvements in the Internet and digital technology, images of radiographs, ultrasounds, ECGs, lab reports, medical records and camera images can be sent to a specialist anywhere in the world. Telemedicine allows even the most remotely located veterinarians or client receive a consultation about a case with an expert. A veterinarian can obtain critical diagnostic and therapeutic expertise quickly, no matter what the type of case he is seeing.

When a veterinarian purchases an ultrasound machine it often comes with a computer, a scanner and a digital camera. The ultrasound images from the machine can be combined with pictures of the X-rays, the ECG and the medical record and sent over the phone line or a high speed digital connection to a specialist, in cardiology for example. A novice ultrasound user can also consult on-line while actually performing the ultrasound, so an expert can guide the transducer to show a problem or lesion better on the screen. ("move your hand a little farther toward the right and I think you'll see the mass show up better.") Advanced microscopes and video cameras let veterinarians transmit images of slides under the microscope or the inside of the intestines to a pathologist or gastroenterologist. It's a whole new world of exciting possibilities to learn and share. With telemedicine, every case can be a teaching and learning tool.