Indirect Blood Pressure Monitoring

Indirect blood pressure monitoring is performed with a Doppler. Depending on the size of the bird, a No. 1, 2 or 3 sized cuff can be placed around the distal femur or humerus (Figures 1 and 2). The tarsal-metatarsal or ulnar arterial blood flow is then identified using the Doppler. The cuff is then insufflated to a pressure greater than the blood pressure to completely occlude blood flow. The cuff is then gently deflated until the first sound is heard. This identifies the systolic blood pressure.

Figure 1.
Indirect blood pressure measurement in a Quaker parrot with manual restraint. Photo: Lauren Powers.
Indirect blood pressure measurements do not always correlate with direct arterial measurements but THEY can provide trends in the anesthetized bird.

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