



YOUR CAT'S HEALTH, OUR PASSION • VOLUME 3, ISSUE 9 • SEPTEMBER 2011 NEWSLETTER

## FELINE DIABETES MELLITUS

Diabetes mellitus, the medical name for diabetes, is a metabolic disease caused by a lack of insulin or a resistance to insulin. Insulin is a hormone produced by the pancreas; a lack of insulin affects the level of glucose, or sugar, in your cat's blood.

Glucose is absorbed from the intestines into the bloodstream, where it travels to cells throughout the body. These cells need insulin in order to absorb glucose. If there is a lack of insulin, or if the tissues are resistant to the insulin, the sugar level in the blood remains too high and spills into the urine, causing numerous problems.

Obesity predisposes cats to diabetes. Aging, genetics, physical inactivity, and other insulin-resistant diseases (such as pancreatitis or hyperthyroidism) may also be contributing factors. Clinical signs of diabetes include excessive drinking and urination, increased appetite, weight loss in spite of ravenous appetite, poor coordination, inappropriate urination, vomiting, lethargy, lack of grooming, and thinning or dull coat.

Diabetes is diagnosed with a physical examination and labwork. Once diabetes has been diagnosed, immediate treatment is needed.

Treatment typically consists of insulin injections under the skin twice daily (12 hours apart). Glipizide (an oral drug) may also be prescribed; this drug stimulates the pancreas to produce more insulin, but its use may lead to the kitty requiring insulin injections in the future. Diet is also very important in controlling diabetes. A high-protein, low-carbohydrate diet is most

effective because it provides extra energy without extra carbohydrates that turn into excess sugar.

It is important to monitor blood and urine glucose carefully until your cat's condition is stabilized; we can discuss ways you can monitor at home. Fructosamine testing (done at our office) may also be necessary; this test lets us measure how well your cat's diabetes is regulated over a period of time. During the early weeks of treatment, several re-examinations may be needed. Once your cat is stable, blood and urine glucose plus fructosamine will need periodic monitoring.

For more-detailed information about diabetes mellitus, please ask for a copy of our diabetes handout. And please let us know if you have any questions about this disease, or if you notice your kitty displaying any of the symptoms noted above.

With effective treatment and monitoring, a diabetic cat can have the same life expectancy as a non-diabetic cat. Managing your kitty's diabetes will require some effort, but with appropriate treatment, your diabetic pet can maintain a good quality of life.



## FELINE FLEA CONTROL

Did you know that an adult flea can jump about 13 inches high—200 times its own height? While this feat may sound impressive, it's not one that you hope to observe inside your home.

In addition to distributing painful, itchy bites on furry and human family members alike, fleas are carriers of a number of diseases that can affect your kitty—or you. This includes tapeworms, Feline Infectious Anemia, and bartonella (also called Cat Scratch Disease). Some kitties suffer a severe allergic reaction to flea bites, causing them to scratch themselves raw in bitten areas.

Fortunately, there are a number of easy-to-administer monthly topical medications to help prevent flea infestations. Please ask us for more information.



## SEPTEMBER SPECIAL OFFERS FOR OUR READERS

Through September 30, **receive one free treatment of Advantage topical flea control** when you bring your kitty to the Sacramento Cat Hospital for an exam.

Through September 30, **receive a fecal (parasite/ova) test for just \$9.95**. This is a laboratory test to determine if a stool sample contains parasites or eggs (ova) associated with intestinal infections. An exam is not required for the fecal test; however, if parasites/ova are noted, an exam will be needed before medication can be dispensed.

Please ask us for more information.

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