

DIABETES IN PETS- TREATMENT IS A TEAM EFFORT

Just as in humans, diabetes in pets occurs when the body cannot convert glucose, or sugar, into energy due to problems producing or regulating the hormone insulin. This creates toxic compounds called ketones that, if left untreated, can result in serious illness or death. To help the pet process glucose properly, owners must administer insulin injections.

Though it may be a challenge to overcome the fear of needles, the results make the experience worthwhile.

At SunShine Animal Hospital we can help you overcome the fear of needles and how to manage your pets' diabetes.

In addition to insulin injections, diabetic pets must periodically visit the veterinarian for a Glucose Curve, a series of blood tests that measure how well the insulin dosage is working, or a Fructosamine test, which assesses blood glucose control over the last two to three weeks and requires only one blood sample.

While diabetes in humans and animals is similar, there are some interesting differences when it comes to managing the disease in dogs versus cats.

While dogs typically require lifelong treatment, some cats can spontaneously recover, requiring no further treatment.

Blood sugar levels in cats can also spike when they are excited or stressed. When this happens in the veterinary hospital, the cat's glucose may seem out of control when it is actually stable.

In some cases, we will recommend owners use home urine glucose tests strips to help monitor the disease.

You still need to have periodic visits to the veterinarian to do the glucose curve and make sure everything's going well. Of course, we counsel our clients to watch for changes in water consumption and urine output. If you suddenly see these behaviors start to increase markedly, then we know we're losing control and we need to adjust the insulin dosage.

Those warning signs are also crucial to note before your pet's diagnosis. Signs of diabetes in pets include:

- Increased thirst and appetite



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- Larger volume of urine
- Weight loss, despite eating
- Cataract formation in dogs

In advanced cases, neuropathy in the rear legs that causes pets to crouch when walking (primarily seen in cats) or loss of appetite

To help prevent diabetes, we suggest making sure your dog or cat maintains a healthy weight. If your pet needs to take steroids to treat another issue, pay close attention to his behavior as this medication can promote diabetes.

As with any disease, early detection is best, so call us if you suspect your pet is experiencing any of these signs. Because the signs of diabetes are similar to other medical problems, it is key to consult us instead of Dr. Google... you can look on the internet and believe your pet is diabetic when it's actually going into renal failure.