



## Diabetes in Dogs

Diabetes mellitus is a disorder of sugar (glucose) metabolism. It results when the pancreas does not produce enough insulin. Typical symptoms include excessive water drinking, frequent urination, increased appetite, and weight loss.

We can determine when a pet is diabetic by using blood and urine samples. Just the same as in people, the disease is not curable, but can be controlled. Treatment involves twice daily insulin injections under the skin. In addition, the amount of food and exercise should be kept as consistent as possible. Be sure not to give your pet any food other than their medicated food. Never give them people food or snacks. The goal of therapy is keeping the blood glucose within an acceptable range and the elimination of symptoms. All animals are different and dosage adjustments occasionally may need to be made. Diabetic animals will need to be treated for the rest of their lives, and a well regulated diabetic can live a happy and healthy life.

Occasionally, these complications arise in diabetic animals.

1. The most serious complication that can occur is insulin overdose, and the symptoms are weakness and occasionally seizures. Keep corn syrup on hand at home. If the only symptom observed is weakness, give 1-2 tsp. per 10 pounds of body weight and offer food. If seizures and/or collapse occur, massage corn syrup into the pet's gums and call us immediately. We will want you to bring your pet in to be seen, and be sure to tell the receptionist that you talk with that your pet is diabetic. Do not force an unconscious animal to swallow the corn syrup.
2. Another problem occurs when your pet is sick from a different illness, or they do not want to eat for a day. If your pet is not eating, and or not feeling well, please give us a call and to be sure to tell the receptionist that your pet is diabetic. If your pet is not eating, but is acting normally, go ahead and give half the usual insulin dose, wait a few hours and offer food again. If your pet is still not eating by the end of the day, do not give your pet any more insulin and call us in the morning.
3. Finally, if your pet jumps during the injection or if you accidentally push the needle all the way through the skin to the point that some of the insulin is given outside of the skin, please do not repeat the injection. Go ahead and wait until the next dosage and give the normal amount of insulin at that time.