



Feline Diabetes Mellitus:

Diabetes Mellitus (DM) is a condition where your cat's body either doesn't produce enough **insulin** (a hormone that regulates blood sugar) or doesn't respond properly to the insulin it does produce. This results in high blood sugar (glucose) levels, which can cause serious health issues if left untreated.

Successful management is absolutely possible and will allow your cat to live a happy, high-quality life!



What are the Warning Signs of Feline Diabetes?

The most common signs are related to the body trying to eliminate excess sugar through the urine.

Sign	What You Might Notice
Increased Urination	More frequent trips to the litter box or larger urine clumps.
Increased Thirst	Constantly drinking water or seeking unusual sources (faucets, etc.).
Increased Appetite	Acting constantly hungry or begging for food more than usual.
Weight Loss	Losing weight despite eating well or eating more than usual.
Lethargy	Less active, sleeping more, or no longer jumping on furniture.
Walking "Flat"	Walking on the ankles (hocks) of the hind legs instead of the toes.

If you notice any of these signs, please call us to schedule an exam and testing immediately.

How is Feline Diabetes Managed?

Managing diabetes requires a consistent routine focusing on three main areas:

1. Insulin Therapy (Cornerstone of Treatment)

- **Injections:** Most cats require **twice-daily injections** of insulin, given right under the skin (subcutaneously).
 - *Tip: We will provide thorough, one-on-one training. Most owners find it much easier than they anticipate, and cats quickly adjust!*
- **Consistency is Key:** Insulin must be administered on a strict, consistent schedule, typically every 12 hours, and usually following a meal.
- **Storage:** Insulin must be stored correctly (usually refrigerated) and should **never be frozen or exposed to excessive heat/sunlight**.
- **Syringes:** **Always use the correct syringe** (e.g., U-40 syringe for U-40 insulin). Using the wrong syringe is a dangerous dosing error.

2. Diet and Weight Management

- **Low-Carbohydrate Diet:** A **high-protein, low-carbohydrate** diet (often prescription wet food) is strongly recommended as it helps stabilize blood sugar levels. This can often reduce the amount of insulin needed.
- **Weight Loss:** If your cat is overweight, gradual weight loss is crucial, as obesity increases insulin resistance and complicates treatment.
- **Do NOT Change Diet Suddenly:** Consult with us before making any diet changes, as this will affect the insulin dose.

3. Monitoring and Tracking

Careful monitoring at home is essential for successful treatment. We recommend keeping a daily log of:

- **Appetite and Behavior:** Is your cat eating all their food? Is their activity level normal?
 - **Water Intake and Urination:** Are the excessive drinking and urination (Polydipsia/Polyuria) improving?
 - **Insulin Dose and Time:** Record the exact dose and time of each injection.
 - **Blood Glucose (BG) Monitoring (if recommended):** This may involve home monitoring using a small drop of blood (often from the ear) and a specialized meter.
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Hypoglycemia (Low Blood Sugar) Emergency

Hypoglycemia is a medical emergency that can be life-threatening. It occurs when your cat's blood sugar drops too low, usually due to too much insulin or not enough food.

Signs of Hypoglycemia	What to Do Immediately
Extreme Lethargy or Weakness	Rub 1-2 teaspoons of corn syrup or honey onto your cat's gums.
Shaking or Trembling	Offer your cat their regular food right away.
Unusual Behavior or Disorientation	If they eat and show improvement, give a small amount of their meal and then call us.
Seizures or Collapse	SEEK IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY VETERINARY CARE.

NEVER skip an insulin dose if your cat is eating, but if your cat refuses to eat, call us before giving insulin.

★ Outlook: Feline Diabetic Remission

Unlike in dogs, cats can enter a state of **diabetic remission**, where they no longer require insulin injections! This is most likely when:

- Diabetes is diagnosed and treated early.
- A strict, low-carbohydrate diet is followed.
- Overweight cats achieve a healthy weight.

Remission requires continued monitoring, as relapse is possible, but it is a wonderful goal to work toward!

Remember: You are your cat's best advocate. We are a team, and we are here to support you every step of the way.