

Recognize the Top 4 Signs of Diabetes In Your Pet...

...and what you can do about it

It's never too soon to recognize the early signs of diabetes in your dog or cat. To help build awareness of this health problem, National Pet Diabetes Awareness Month is observed each November as a time to recognize warning signs of diabetes mellitus in your pet.



Diabetes develops when the body stops producing insulin, or produces too little insulin, which is needed for turning glucose into energy. Knowing how to recognize the early warning signs can help you address diabetes before bigger problems such as blindness and kidney failure develop. Here are the top four signs to look for that merit a call to your veterinarian.

Thirst

For Sandy's Golden Retriever, Ginger it wasn't unusual to take drinks of water throughout the day. But when Ginger started draining the water bowl repeatedly, Sandy took notice. Thirst is an early warning sign of diabetes.

Frequent Urination

Ginger started begging to go out more often to urinate, and had a few accidents in the house. Frequent urination is another early warning sign of diabetes.

Hunger and Rapid Weight Loss

Ginger always loved food, but started acting like she was starving in spite of her regular meals. Plus, she started rapidly losing weight, which sent warning bells off in Sandy's head.

Lethargy

Sandy noticed Ginger sleeping a lot more. She also didn't want to get up from her bed. That's when Sandy called her veterinarian.

What The Symptoms Mean

At the vet, Ginger was examined and blood work was done. When the results came in, Sandy learned that Ginger had Type II Diabetes Mellitus, which is typically caused by obesity, poor diet and lack of exercise. She

thought about the table scraps she liked to give Ginger, as well as special treats that she gave throughout the day, every day. It was often hard for Sandy to find the time to take her for walks and yes, Ginger was a little pudgy around the middle until she suddenly started losing weight.

Sandy's vet explained that many cases of diabetes in pets can be avoided with good diet and an exercise regimen to keep weight in check. However, in Ginger's case, she would need oral medication to help control her diabetes, along with a special diet and exercise plan.

Diabetes Is Preventable

With a new diet and exercise plan, plus medication, Ginger returned to a normal weight and energy level. Not too long after, Sandy brought home a new puppy and Ginger now has all the energy and stamina she needs to keep up with the young dog.

Ask your veterinarian for tips on how to prevent this devastating disease in your pets – it can be as simple as feeding only prescribed foods, taking dogs for daily walks and playing with your cat, and ensuring they have an annual exam to address any warning signs as they appear.