

Vets Park

for the pets in your life - your vet for life

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Diabetes

Your pet has been diagnosed with diabetes. This means that the pancreas is either no longer producing insulin or possibly the tissues have become insensitive to it.

Management of pets with diabetes requires both financial and emotional commitment from you the owner. It is vital that we work as a team. You play an important role in ensuring your pet receives any prescribed diet food and it is very likely you will need to give daily medication, possibly injections, for life.

Treatment of Diabetes

Diabetes can be treated very successfully in most pets. Treatment initially involves bringing the blood glucose (sugar) levels back to normal. This requires once or twice daily insulin injections and possibly feeding your pet a special diet, especially if your pet is overweight. Research shows that some overweight pets can revert to being non-diabetic if they are able to lose sufficient weight. This is especially true in cats.

We may recommend a high protein very low carbohydrate food for cats with diabetes as many cats are very thin on initial presentation. You can continue to allow your cat free access to food throughout the day. For dogs it is better to feed at set meal times, twice daily.

Many owners are scared of the prospect of giving their pets daily injections but we will help you through the early days and weeks and most of our clients find out that it's easier than it looks at first. Don't worry, we are here to help.

Insulin must be stored in the fridge and should be carefully handled. Do not shake the bottle vigorously or you could damage the complex insulin molecule and render the insulin useless. We will supply you with special insulin syringes and needles, as accurate dosing is vital. These syringes and needles must be brought back to us for safe disposal. We can also supply safe sharps disposal boxes, useful if you have small children at home

A brand new 'VetPen' is also available, similar to the devices that humans use to manage their diabetes. These pens make giving injections and storing the insulin even easier, especially if you travel a lot.

After the initial stabilisation period, which usually lasts around 2 weeks we recommend repeat blood samples to check blood sugar levels, ideally over a period of 24 hours. This is called a 'glucose curve'. By plotting a glucose curve for your pet we can establish if the insulin dose we have selected is optimum or needs adjusting.

We also like to keep an eye on your pet's liver and kidney function and may also need regular urine samples to check for the presence of glucose (sugar) and to make sure there are no urinary tract infections developing. These can be common in pets with diabetes.

Written estimates can be given for each test that may be needed.

Hypoglycaemia

It is important that you are aware of the potential for a low blood sugar level called hypoglycaemia. This is a veterinary emergency. If your pet appears listless, dull, twitchy or exhibits unusual behaviour, call us immediately on 01242 517199

Our approach is the gold standard for the diagnosis, treatment and monitoring of pets with diabetes. We understand that some of these procedures may be difficult for individual clients to afford. If this is the case please feel free to discuss this with the veterinary surgeon so we can work together to tailor a bespoke programme for your own pet.

There is a huge amount of information available on the internet about diabetes in pets. Not all of it is accurate. We are happy with the following websites:

www.icatcare.org/advice-centre/cat-health/diabetes-mellitus

www.pet-diabetes.co.uk