

Vets Park

for the pets in your life - your vet for life

 **01242 517199**

Moorend Grove, Leckhampton,
Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL53 0EX
fax: 01242 539337

email: votpchelt@hotmail.co.uk
www.vetsonthepark.co.uk



Vets on the Park Limited
Registered in England and Wales Number: 5494738
Director: A.S Jones
Registered Office: Lyndale, Moorend Grove, Leckhampton,
Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL53 0EX

Hypothyroidism

Your dog has been diagnosed with hypothyroidism.

This means that the thyroid gland is not producing sufficient levels of thyroid hormone causing the changes you have noticed. The most common cause of hypothyroidism is called lymphocytic thyroiditis, where the thyroid cells are destroyed by antibodies produced by your dog's own immune system.

Management of dogs with hypothyroidism 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 dog receives the medication, which is needed once or twice daily for life. You cannot stop giving the medication when your dog looks better.

Treating Dogs with Hypothyroidism

Hypothyroidism can be treated very successfully in most dogs. Treatment involves bringing the levels of thyroid hormones in the blood back to normal. This requires you to give your dog daily (or even twice daily) thyroid replacement hormone in the form of tablets called 'Soloxine' or a once-daily liquid called 'Leventia'.

The tablets are a synthetic form of active thyroid hormone and so you should wash your hands after handling them. They can be split or crushed if needed.

It is important that the tablets are kept in the dark. The thyroid replacement medication should be given at the same time every day on an empty stomach.

After an initial 4 week stabilisation period we recommend repeat blood samples to check the thyroid levels. This is important because each dog is an individual and the exact dose that is needed to stabilise your dog will be unique.

We need to try to get the thyroid hormone levels within the normal range all day. To check this we will take a blood sample just before the treatment is due. This should show us the lowest hormone level all day (called the nadir).

We then give your dog their medication and check the blood again.

It may take several months for you to notice a change in your dog's hair regrowth. It can help to take a photograph of the 'before' situation so we can easily

compare how your dog is doing. Do not worry if you think your dog's coat condition actually seems to get worse between 2 and 6 weeks after treatment is started. This is very common and will resolve.

Long Term Management

When your dog's hypothyroidism is initially diagnosed and treated we will settle on a starting maintenance dose. It is important that you understand that this dose may change with time. This is because once the destruction of the thyroid gland has started it progresses over a 1-3 year period. This means that your dog may need an increasing dose to keep pace with the increasing thyroid destruction.

Therefore we need to monitor your dog's pre- and post-treatment blood levels every 3-6 months.

Some dogs will have other health issues, such as gut disease or maybe other hormonal problems. These patients need special care and may need closer monitoring.

We are unable to issue a written prescription or dispense your dog's medication unless we are happy that your dog is being adequately managed. This is for the benefit of your dog.

Please therefore give us at least 5 days notice when more medication is needed. This allows us to review your dog's history and arrange for blood tests to be performed if needed.

Our approach is the gold standard for diagnosis, treatment and monitoring of dogs with hypothyroidism. We understand that some of these procedures may be difficult for individual clients to afford. If this is the case please discuss this with the veterinary surgeon so we can tailor a bespoke programme for your dog.

There is a lot of information available on the internet about canine hypothyroidism. Not all of it is accurate. These are websites we have checked and we are happy with their content:

www.leventia.com

www.soloxine.co.uk