

Diabetes Mellitus

Your cat has been diagnosed with diabetes mellitus, sometimes called sugar diabetes. In cats diabetes can be either type 1 or type 2 diabetes. At this time, your cat is not producing adequate insulin in his/her system and will need to be given insulin injections once or twice daily.

What are the clinical signs of Diabetes?

A cat with diabetes cannot remove sugar from the blood. This causes the cat's sugar level to increase and eventually the sugar spills over into the urine. Uncontrolled diabetics urinate large volumes; often the first sign of diabetes is heavier litter box or indiscriminate urination. Because the cat cannot use the sugar in his/her blood, the cat will eat more in a vain attempt to increase the available sugar.

Diagnosing Diabetes Mellitus

Diabetes is diagnosed by a combination of high blood sugar levels and the presence of sugar in the urine. If either of these tests are positive, we may do a fructosamine. This tells us the sugar level in the blood over 1 month.

Treatment and Monitoring

Your cat will be started on insulin once or twice a day. Some cats will require twice a day insulin. The insulin should be stored in the refrigerator and gently rolled in your hand prior to administration. Do not shake the insulin. Draw up the required units and administer under the skin immediately before meal time. Your pet should be fed twice daily and may be placed on a special diet to help regulate the glucose levels if no other concurrent medical problems exist. The needles can be disposed of in an empty plastic milk bottle or returned to the clinic for disposal. Please do not give the insulin in the exact same location every day.

Please give _____ units of _____ insulin _____ times per day.

After one month of treatment, your cat will come into the clinic for a glucose curve. Your cat should be dropped off at the hospital prior to insulin administration with his/her insulin and food. This curve will take the entire day. As your pet's glucose level stabilizes, we may be able to monitor him/her with a fructosamine level. This requires only a single blood draw and no hospitalization.

Please call if your cat is not eating, vomiting, or seems lethargic. If your dog receives too much insulin, his/her blood sugar can drop too low and your pet may become comatose. If you find your pet unresponsive, please place some pancake syrup or Karo syrup on your dog's tongue and call us immediately.

Consequences of Diabetes

Untreated diabetics can become ketotic. This causes life threatening electrolyte abnormalities. This causes vomiting, dehydration, and can progress to collapse. A ketotic cat will require hos-

pitalization and intensive care.

Diabetes makes your pet more prone to infection. Urinary tract infection is very common in diabetic pets as the sugar in the urine is a perfect environment for bacteria. When we check your pet's glucose level, we will frequently ask you to bring a urine sample so we can check for infection.