

ENDOCRINE DISORDERS IN DOGS & CATS

Liver Disease In Dogs & Cats:

The major function of the liver is to filter toxins.

What to watch for ...

Lethargy, fever, loss of appetite, drooling, vomiting, diarrhea, excessive thirst & urination, ascites, seizures, yellowing of mucous membranes, eyes & skin (jaundice)

Causation – may be infectious e.g. Lepto or a parasite; toxicities; toxic sprays, drug-induced e.g. prednisone, tetracycline; congenital e.g. portosystemic shunts; tumors, (usually metastatic).

Other problems include gall bladder inflammation and gall stones.

A fat-free diet may need to be recommended. (see notes on pancreatitis)

The Endocrine System

The endocrine system is composed of several different types of glands and organs that produce the hormones of your pet's body. A hormone is a chemical that is secreted by a gland in one area of the body and carried by the bloodstream to other organs in the body, where it exerts some effect. Most hormones regulate the activity or structure of their target organs. Endocrine problems have many causes, from external stressors to internal genetic disorders. There are so many factors affecting the endocrine system including drugs, vaccinations, food additives, stress, that an holistic approach is required when considering a treatment plan.

There are many excellent herbs and homeopathic remedies that can assist in the treatment of endocrine and liver dysfunction.

Attention to diet is crucial for all of these ailments.



Our naturopathic services:

Homeopathy Herbal Medicine Bach Flowers
Tissue Salts Bioceuticals
NatPet animal remedies. Biopteron Light Therapy
Reiki & Bowen Nutritional Advice

ANIMAL NATUROPATH:

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In this pamphlet we discuss the following ailments associated with the Endocrine System:

PANCREATITIS

DIABETES MEL

THYROID (Hypothyroidism & Hyperthyroidism)

CUSHINGS

ADDISONS

ADRENAL STRESS

LIVER & GALL BLADDER AILMENTS

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Diabetes in Dogs

What to watch for

Excessive urination, drinking more
May lose weight and muscle mass
Loss of appetite, vomiting
Dehydration, depression, lethargy
Unkempt look, cataracts

Type 1 requires insulin.

Type 2 is controlled with diet, weight and oral meds. Often inherited.

Aim is to provide all nutritional needs and minimise fluctuations in glucose concentrations. Feed similar food daily. Watch weight carefully - low fat, high fibre, high in complex carbs so that glucose is released in a steady manner from the gut.

Following a vet check diet may include:

Lentils, barley, pumpkin, broccoli, carrots, spinach. Low fat cottage cheese/yoghurt, free range or organic chicken (low fat). Other low *glycaemic foods include high fibre veges and fruits, legumes (beans).

**Glycaemic = the presence of glucose (sugar) in the blood. The lower the Glycaemic Index score, the more slowly the rise in blood sugar, which can help the body better manage post-meal changes.*

Hypothyroidism In Dogs

The thyroid gland in the neck makes insufficient hormone thyroxine that controls metabolism.

What to watch for...

Hair loss (usually on trunk, back of rear legs, tail)
Coat dull and thin, skin flaky but not itchy
Black patches of skin
Weight gain, muscle loss, sluggishness
Slowed heart rate
Nail and ear infections
Unusual aggressiveness
Diet – Fatty fish (high in omega 3's, high in selenium. Fresh fruits & veges, seaweed, beans. Don't overdo. Avoid cruciferous veges (broccoli, cauliflower, brussel sprouts, kale).

Hyperthroidism In Cats

Condition arising when thyroxine is produced in excessive amounts by the thyroid. Body burns up food, appetite increases but weight still lost.

What to watch for...

General overactivity with restlessness
Tension, anxiety
Vaccinations may have detrimental effect.
Diet - Provide protein and fat levels for elderly cat. Increase calorie content. Low vegetable, fruit, grain diet.

Adrenal Stress

The Adrenals control the salt balance in the body, steroid hormones for growth, repair & inflammatory responses, production of sex hormones, & the 'fight & flight' stress response. Stress can be internalised rather than released, leading to chronic disease. There are many herbs that support the adrenals and these should be considered in any situation where there is an element of stress and nervous exhaustion.

Pancreatitis in the dog

The pancreas is an 'accessory' digestive organ which produces enzymes that break down food.

What to watch for....

Loss of appetite, lethargy, abdominal pain (panting, trembling, hunched-up), possible diarrhoea, frothy stool, vomiting, sensitivity to touch, fever.

Following a vet check diet may include:

Free range skinless chicken meat, beef heart or kidney, small amount of liver, egg whites, non fat plain yoghurt/cottage cheese, oatmeal, barley. Veges – broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, dark leafy greens, yellow veges, winter squash. Prefer to cook all food. Start to feed small amounts frequently. Low fat diets may be deficient in vitamins A & E. Vitamin A present in liver, fish oils. dandelion, alfalfa, pumpkin. Vitamin E present in liver, green plants, kelp, alfalfa, dandelion.

Cushings

Hyperadrenocorticism = overproduction of the adrenal cortex hormones; occurs chiefly in older dogs and cats or induced by over administration of corticosteroid drugs. Most commonly seen in the horse and dog.

What to watch for.... increased thirst, urination, hunger, panting; pot belly, obesity, fat pads on neck & shoulders, recurrent infections of skin, ear, urinary tract, loss of hair. The hormones produced are antagonistic to insulin and may give rise to hyperglycaemia therefore dietary recommendations similar to diabetic animals