



Alabama Veterinary Medical Association

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Protecting People, Pets and Livestock - Yesterday, Today and Always.

PRESS RELEASE

November is Pet Diabetes Month

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MONTGOMERY, Ala. - The Alabama Veterinary Medical Association wants to remind pet owners that pets can also develop diabetes. November is Pet Diabetes Month and an opportunity to bring awareness to pet owners that their pets are also at risk. There are signs to look for that indicate your pet may have diabetes. Diabetes in pets is treatable, but diagnosis is key to ensuring your pet will live a long, healthy life.

"Pet diabetes can be managed successfully and your pet can live a normal, healthy life," says ALVMA President Bill Allen, D.V.M. "It is important that you have your pet examined by your veterinarian and get on a treatment program if your pet is diagnosed with diabetes."

November is National Diabetes Month and just like people, our pets can also suffer from diabetes. Diabetes is an inability of the animal's body to detect and regulate the uptake of glucose into the body. This is normally due to either an inability of the pancreas to produce insulin at all (Type 1 diabetes) or the pancreas can't produce enough insulin (Type 2).

Symptoms of diabetes in pets include: excessive eating, excessive drinking, excessive urination, weight loss, persistent urinary tract infections and, possibly, cataracts. Although numbers are hard to pinpoint, it is believed that the prevalence of diabetes in our pets average about 1 in 500. In one study, diabetes rates increased from 0.2% to 0.6% of pets in just 30 years. Experts worry that as our pets' obesity epidemic continues, diabetes prevalence will rise as well.

Almost all dogs develop Type 1 diabetes. We don't understand the exact reason why, but dogs that are obese or on corticosteroids for extended periods of time are predisposed to the disease. Cats, on the other hand, are almost always Type 2 diabetics. This is also known as non-insulin dependent diabetes. Like dogs, chubby cats and cats taking steroids routinely can develop a resistance to insulin. Additionally, chronic inflammation in the cat can create amyloid deposits that destroy normal pancreatic tissue. Diabetic dogs will almost always need to be on insulin for the remainder of their lives. Some cats can have their diabetes controlled and even reversed by good glucose control and proper diet.

Diabetic pets are managed with injectable insulin, a good consistent diet, proper exercise and weight loss. Diabetes is not and should not be a death sentence for your pet. With proper training and consistent attention, you can help your pet live a long and wonderful life.

Founded in 1907, The Alabama Veterinary Medical Association is comprised of approximately 725 veterinarians from around the state, all committed to protecting People, Pets and Livestock – Yesterday, Today and Always.

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