

Guidelines at a Glance

Diabetic dogs can live a good quality of life with few or no clinical signs, facilitated by clients' and veterinary teams' commitment to attentive patient care and monitoring, dietary and schedule adjustments, and diligent follow-up evaluations. Start with positive and honest conversations between clients and veterinary teams about expectations for treatment and goals, patient monitoring, and the commitment required from the pet's family members and care team. Many dogs who require lifelong treatment tolerate insulin therapy well.

In these guidelines, veterinary teams will find:

- An overview of diabetes pathophysiology in dogs to understand the species-specific aspects of this disease
- How to diagnose diabetes mellitus in dogs
- Insulin treatment and monitoring
- Expert tips on troubleshooting issues and problems
- Treating diabetic ketoacidosis
- What tests to use to monitor glycemic status
- Dietary management
- Client communication tips
- Charts and algorithms that provide step-by-step guidance for:
 - Types of insulin and starting dosages
 - Monitoring and adjusting insulin treatment
 - Troubleshooting hypoglycemia
 - Approach to dogs on high doses of insulin who have become unregulated



3/2/1

3 Takeaways



Documenting glucosuria and concurrent hyperglycemia establishes a diabetes mellitus diagnosis in dogs.



Differentiate patients with clinical diabetes from those with transient causes of insulin resistance or those with conditions causing sustained insulin resistance that increase their risk of developing diabetes mellitus.



Absolute insulin deficiency predictably results in ketosis within several days, so most dogs have a relatively short period of clinical signs before presentation.

2 Actions



Interpret all monitoring modalities by considering the presence or absence of clinical signs. Diabetes is considered well controlled if the patient does not exhibit polyuria, polydipsia, or polyphagia, and body weight is stable or increasing.



Spaying or neutering dogs following a diabetes diagnosis may help mitigate hormonal influence on insulin sensitivity or treatment response.

1 Thing to Never Forget



The primary goal of treating canine diabetes mellitus is to control clinical signs. Tight glycemic control is rarely possible using twice-daily intermediate-acting insulin. Occasional brief periods of significant hyperglycemia (>300 mg/dL) are expected in patients with good clinical control and do not require additional workup.