



FRANKTOWN ANIMAL CLINIC

Compassionate care for pets and their people.



DIABETES IN DOGS & CATS

At Franktown Animal Clinic, we understand that a diabetes diagnosis can feel overwhelming. Our team is here to support you and your pet every step of the way. With proper management, diabetic pets can live long, happy lives. We are committed to providing you with the guidance and care needed to help your pet thrive.

What is Diabetes?

Diabetes mellitus is a condition where the body cannot properly regulate blood sugar (glucose) due to insufficient insulin production or ineffective use of insulin. Insulin is essential for allowing glucose to enter cells for energy. Without it, blood sugar levels become dangerously high.



Diabetes Mellitus and Diabetic Ketoacidosis (DKA)

- **Diabetes Mellitus (DM)** is the most common form of diabetes in pets, characterized by persistently high blood sugar levels requiring insulin therapy.
- **Diabetic Ketoacidosis (DKA)** is a serious and life-threatening complication of untreated or poorly managed diabetes. In DKA, the body breaks down fat for energy, leading to the buildup of acids (ketones) in the blood. Symptoms of DKA include vomiting, weakness, rapid breathing, and lethargy. This requires immediate veterinary care.



Is Diabetes Different in Dogs and Cats?

Yes. In dogs, diabetes is most similar to Type 1 diabetes in humans, where the pancreas does not produce enough insulin. This means that lifelong insulin therapy is required. In cats, diabetes more closely resembles Type 2 diabetes in humans, where insulin resistance develops. With proper treatment and management, some cats can go into remission and no longer require insulin.



What Are the Symptoms of Diabetes?

- Increased thirst and urination
- Lethargy or weakness
- Poor coat condition (more common in cats)
- Increased appetite with weight loss
- Cloudy eyes (more common in dogs)
- Urinary tract infections



How is Diabetes Diagnosed?

Diagnosing diabetes involves a few simple tests that help us understand how your pet's body is managing blood sugar. Together, these results allow your veterinarian to make an accurate diagnosis and create an appropriate treatment plan.

- **Bloodwork:** Elevated blood glucose levels
- **Urinalysis:** Glucose present in the urine
- **Fructosamine Test:** Measures long-term blood sugar levels



How is Diabetes Usually Treated?

The exact treatment plan will vary depending on your pet's condition, lifestyle, and response to care. Treatment typically involves several components that work together to manage blood sugar levels, including:

- **Insulin Therapy:** Medication is given as injections under the skin.
- **Dietary Management:** Specialized diets may help stabilize blood sugar.
- **Weight Management:** Maintaining a healthy weight is crucial.
- **Routine Blood Sugar Monitoring:** Simple tests may be done at home or in the clinic.



What's Next if Your Pet is Diagnosed with Diabetes?

- **Frequent vet visits at first** help to ensure proper insulin dosing.
- **Home glucose monitoring** may be recommended to track blood sugar trends.
- **Future diagnostics**, including routine bloodwork and urinalysis, help your veterinarian monitor your pet's overall health.
- **Treatment adjustments**, including insulin doses, may be needed over time.
- **Long-term management** and proper care can help diabetic pets live happy, healthy lives.



What Can You Do at Home to Help?

Caring for a pet with diabetes is a team effort, and you play the most important role at home. These simple daily habits help support stable blood sugar levels and your pet's overall well-being.

- Monitor your pet's drinking, urination, and appetite.
- Keep a consistent feeding schedule with a veterinarian-approved diet.
- Administer prescribed insulin correctly and on schedule.
- Maintain a healthy weight for your pet.
- Watch for signs of low blood sugar (weakness, tremors, or seizures).

If you suspect your pet may have diabetes, please contact us.



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