



# Diabetes in Cat: a treatable condition!

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Diabetes mellitus is a serious medical condition where your pet cannot control his/her blood sugar levels due to problems with insulin production or function. When insulin levels are too low or when the body is resistant to insulin, cell “doors” remain closed for glucose to be utilized as a source of energy. Because of the vast amounts of glucose in the body the cat urinates more often and drinks excessively to make up for the increased water loss.

## Symptoms of diabetes.

Diabetes mellitus has many symptoms with the most common client concerns being excessive urination, excessive thirst and eating while losing weight. Without treatment, severe problems, such as liver and kidney damage, and even death, can occur. The good news is that diabetes is a treatable condition! Diabetes can be permanent, temporary, stable or variable and does require lifelong attention.

**Types of diabetes in cat.** There are two main types of diabetes. Type I diabetes is insulin dependent and Type II diabetes is non-insulin dependent. Cats typically suffer from type II diabetes mellitus first and can be converted to Type I later on.

## Treatment of diabetic Cat.

Although there are standard treatment options for diabetes, diabetic cats can be difficult to treat and every cat responds differently to a given treatment plan. After confirming the diagnosis and determining if your pet has any other health concerns, Dr. Iqbal will most likely begin treatment with a diet change, oral medicine or insulin.

**Optimizing treatment plan.** The first few weeks will be a learning curve for both yourself and your

cat. Frequent trips to the Family Pet Hospital will be needed to assess how your pet is doing and if any modifications to her treatment plan are needed. Several blood tests may be run at 2-3 weekly intervals for several weeks to monitor how your cat's blood glucose levels are responding to the prescribed therapy. The first few weeks of care will be more expensive. After a proper dose of oral medicine or insulin is decided on, your cat may need only a few trips to the hospital a year to reassess her treatment regimen.

**Adjusting your life style.** An important part of treatment is consistency in timing of feeding and medication administration. Develop a method that works well for your family to monitor when oral medicine or injections were given, how much your cat ate, any abnormal behavior, etc.

**You will be the key in treating your cat.** Dr. Iqbal will go over with you how to properly handling of insulin and how to give insulin injection and suggest ways to practice before trying your skills on your cat. Your pet must be given insulin or other medications, fed properly, and observed every day after meals. Cats will either need to accompany you on vacation or a competent person will need to watch over your cat

while you're away.

## What should I feed my diabetic cat?

There is a number of prescription diets geared toward the diabetic patient. Dr. Iqbal will help you choose the right diet for your pet based on your pet's current needs.

**Home monitoring.** Home glucose monitoring can be an important part of long-term management of diabetic cats after they have been stabilized and their oral medicine or insulin type and dosage have been established. Dr. Iqbal will educate you how to monitor your cat's blood glucose level at home.

## What should I be aware of?

Diabetic cats DO need to be carefully monitored for signs of hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) such as; vomiting, sluggishness, difficulty seeing, disorientation, excessive salivation, and, in very advanced cases, seizures. Eventually most diabetic cats will have a hypoglycemic event and knowing how to handle the situation will lower the stress levels for both you and your cat.

Talk to Dr. Iqbal about methods for quickly boosting your pet's glucose levels during these episodes.

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