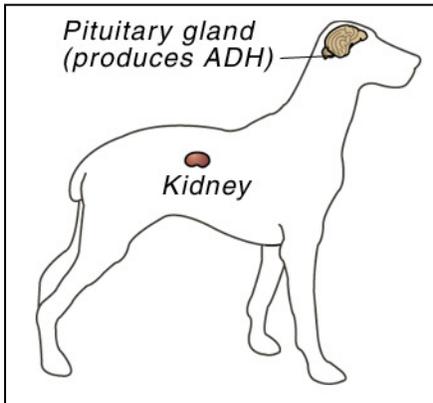


DIABETES INSIPIDUS

What is Diabetes insipidus?

There are two forms of diabetes in dogs: *diabetes insipidus* (“water diabetes”) and *diabetes mellitus* (“sugar diabetes”). Diabetes insipidus is a rare form and is only definitely diagnosed after extensive testing. Fortunately, it is a rare disease in dogs, and even more rare in cats.



My dog is drinking and urinating a lot. Is diabetes insipidus the likely cause?

There are many causes of increased thirst (polydipsia) and increased urine production (polyuria) including diabetes, kidney disease, liver disease, hormonal problems, cancer, and other less common medical conditions. It is essential that several diagnostic tests be performed to determine the cause of your pet's problem.

What causes diabetes insipidus?

Part of the job of the kidneys is to continually filter water from the blood that passes through them and maintain the balance of the body's water by reabsorbing fluid from the blood. Efficient re-absorption requires an adequate level of a hormone known as antidiuretic hormone (ADH - vasopressin) which is produced by the pituitary gland in the brain. If this hormone is not produced in sufficient quantities or if the kidney fails to respond to it, diabetes insipidus can occur.

What are the dangers if left untreated?

Left untreated, dogs with diabetes insipidus can do fine for long periods of time, as long as they have unlimited access to water, and an environment where frequent urination (sometimes multiple times each hour) is not a problem. Many dogs with diabetes insipidus do best if they spend as much time as possible outdoors. A dog suffering from diabetes insipidus is in danger of developing potentially life threatening dehydration if they do not take in sufficient water for even just a few hours. Illness that might make the dog uninterested in drinking water or even something as simple as knocking over a water bowl can endanger their life. Dogs with diabetes insipidus need very large water containers, so they have continuous and plentiful water.

Can the condition be cured?

Like sugar diabetes, water diabetes can sometimes be successfully controlled by administering antidiuretic hormone either by injection or in the form of pills, nasal drops or eye drops, which are not inexpensive. Administering medication only at night to allow proper rest can sometimes work well for some families.

References:

Ernest Ward, DVM, Lifelearn Inc.

Wendy Blount, DVM, PracticalVetMed