

PETS & PEOPLE

Kidney Disease In Pets: New Hope For Longer Life

(NAPSA)—Encouraging news for the thousands of dogs suffering from kidney failure shows that special nutrition could offer them a longer and better quality of life.

Chronic kidney disease affects nearly 20 million Americans. According to the National Kidney Foundation, most don't even know it. Early detection is the key, and new guidelines by the Foundation recommend people at risk for kidney disease have an annual blood and urine test.

Now that same advice is being given to pet owners to help keep their four-legged friends healthy. Kidney disease affects more than one million pets each year and is the leading killer in dogs and cats.

The Silent Killer

The kidneys are organs that maintain the balance of certain chemicals in the blood while filtering out the body's waste as urine. Chronic kidney disease occurs when nephrons, the blood filtering units of the kidney, are damaged.

Since the symptoms of kidney disease may go unnoticed, it is often referred to as a silent killer. The most important preventive measure pet owners can take is to take their pets to the vet for an annual kidney screening which includes a routine blood and urine test.

Signs To Look Out For

Signs of kidney failure include:

- Loss of appetite/weight loss
- Increased thirst
- Changes in urinary habits
- Depression
- Vomiting
- Poor hair/coat.



Claudia Lamprecht of Westerville, Ohio feeds her 12-year old Schnauzer, Katie, a specially formulated dog food clinically proven to help dogs with kidney disease live twice as long.

Slowing The Rate Of Damage

If your pet is diagnosed with kidney failure, it's important to control the amount of protein, phosphorus and sodium in your pet's food, while giving your pet adequate amounts of non-protein calories, vitamins and minerals. Recent research shows that dogs with chronic kidney disease fed a specially formulated pet food called Hill's® Prescription Diet® Canine k/d® live twice as long as those fed a regular pet food.

The food reduces the workload on the kidneys by lowering protein and sodium. It slows ongoing kidney damage by restricting phosphorus and providing essential fatty acids.

For more information, see your veterinarian.