

Be Alert for Subtle Health Issues in Your Dog

Many of the diseases that cause kidney damage can be treated, thereby preventing further damage.

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Heart rhythm abnormalities can go undetected in routine physical exams. Poison ingestion like that of rodenticides may be mistaken for other red blood cell disorders. Inherited disorders such as zinc responsive dermatosis in the Alaskan Malamute, American Eskimo Dog, Samoyed, and Siberian Husky, and copper storage hepatitis in Bedlington Terriers and West Highland White Terriers, can be present for extended periods of time without the dog showing significant signs of disease.

Obesity in dogs seems to be accepted and even overlooked by many dog owners and veterinarians. Feeding grain-based dog foods, where a grain is listed as the first ingredient rather than animal sources such as chicken, lamb, beef or fish, can be an overlooked cause of subtle health difficulties for dogs. Evidence of such food-related difficulties may include a coarse, wiry coat and greasy, flaky skin that is susceptible to infection and pruritus (itchiness). We should always examine, and re-examine, optimum nutrition. It is the foundation of good health for all of us.

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