

Most Diabetic Dogs Need Insulin

Once dog's blood sugar is under control, special supplement may help.

By Jon Geller, DVM

Q. My 9-year-old Jack Russell Terrier was just diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes. I am panicked and have been scouring the Internet looking for information. I did see that there are natural things that can help. Have you heard of DialonX? Obviously I will be working with my vet to begin treatment, but I wanted to see what you think about this product or if you have any advice.

A. First, don't panic and don't worry. Because of all of the work done in humans, diabetes is a very treatable disease in dogs, and most dogs do quite well with the appropriate treatment.

Most diabetes in dogs is considered to be Type 1 – a decrease in the amount of insulin produced by the pancreas' cells.

Although some Type 1 diabetes can be controlled with diet and nutritional supplements, most dogs need twice-daily insulin injections to initially control blood sugar levels. If your dog is overweight, the first step is to get the extra weight off.

Once your dog's blood sugar is back to normal via insulin injections, you might consider trying the supplement you researched. There is no information or research that shows that this supplement has any beneficial effect, but that does not mean it might not help. Hopefully, over time, you may be able reduce the insulin dose.

Most dogs with diabetes do better with a special diet that is slowly absorbed into the bloodstream to avoid rapid spikes in blood sugar.

Giving insulin injections is actually pretty easy, and most dogs tolerate them well especially if they get a little low-calorie treat afterward.