

Weak Dog Needs Tests at Vet's Office

Serious disease can cause increased drinking, inappropriate urination, and poor appetite.

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Q. My dog has been drinking frequently, urinating on the floor, and now she's quit eating. How can you tell if she has diabetes or kidney failure? She is getting weaker and weaker.

A. You are describing signs of a serious underlying disease. Although diabetes and kidney failure would be two of the leading causes of increased drinking, increased urination and loss of appetite, there are other possibilities as well.

There is no way to make a diagnosis without running some basic tests. A urine test strip, the same one your physician uses, will detect high levels of glucose, or sugar, in the urine. A positive test for glucose, combined with the signs you describe, would be highly suggestive of diabetes.

To diagnose kidney failure, a blood test for kidney enzymes is required, along with a measurement of the concentration of the urine. Elevation of kidney enzymes (BUN and creatinine) means dehydration or kidney failure. If the urine is dilute, it indicates that the kidneys cannot concentrate urine and keep water in the body where it is needed.

There is a list of other diseases that could have similar signs, so you should get into your veterinarian as soon as possible to get your dog checked out.