

Accidents, Weight Loss May Signal Diabetes

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Posted: Fri Nov 7 00:00:00 PST 2003

Excessive drinking, excessive urination and weight loss may signal a diabetic pet, says Thomas Schermerhorn, an assistant professor of clinical sciences at Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine. "It's not until pets have made an accident in the house or lose weight, for instance, that owners come in," Schermerhorn said.

In more severe cases, symptoms include vomiting or diarrhea, he said. For dogs, diabetes is mostly similar to Type 1 diabetes in humans. It is typically insulin-dependent. In cats, diabetes is more like Type II diabetes, typically linked to obesity in humans.

In either case, the disease is usually treated by home-administered insulin shots.

"The disease will never be addressed until we do species-specific research," Schermerhorn said. "The cure will come years down the road, but probably will come in the form of transplantation."