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## HYPOTHYROIDISM

**Canine hypothyroidism** is a condition that affects the thyroid gland in dogs. While humans can experience Hypothyroidism and Hyperthyroidism, canines typically only experience Hypothyroidism, and cats typically only experience Hyperthyroidism.

The Thyroid gland is responsible for producing hormones that regulate metabolism and other bodily functions. **When the thyroid gland does not produce enough hormones**, dogs can develop a range of symptoms that can impact their health and well-being. The good news is: it's a disease we can treat quite easily! While it may take few trials to find the appropriate dose for your pup, we only need to check the thyroid annually once their thyroid is supplemented correctly.

The most common symptoms of hypothyroidism in dogs include:

- **Weight gain**
- **Lethargy**
- **Hair loss**
- **Dry and flaky skin.**
- **Behavior changes** (i.e. grumpier than usual)

Typically we see the weight gain and a dry coat full of dandruff in our untreated hypothyroid patients, but some dogs may also experience behavioral changes, such as aggression or anxiety. These symptoms can develop slowly over time, making them easy to miss or mistake for other health issues, which is why the thyroid is checked routinely in our senior patients.

Fortunately, hypothyroidism in dogs can be treated with a medication called **Levothyroxine**. This thyroid hormone replacement therapy is the most common treatment for hypothyroidism in dogs, but they will need to take it twice daily for the rest of their life. It's important to keep up on your pups annual lab work, so we can be confident their thyroid is always functioning properly.

Over time, your dog's symptoms should improve, their coat should start to appear healthy again, and weight loss almost always follows once the thyroid is properly supplemented. Your pup may need a pill twice a day, and blood work every 6 to 12 months, but they should be able to lead a happy & healthy life.

If you start to notice any of the above symptoms returning, it's important that you communicate with your veterinarian, as it could be a sign we need to make an adjustment to their dosage.

In conclusion, canine hypothyroidism is a condition that can impact a dog's health and well-being. However, with proper diagnosis and treatment, dogs with hypothyroidism can lead happy and fulfilling lives. Pet owners should be aware of the signs of hypothyroidism in dogs and seek veterinary care if they suspect their dog may be affected. With patience and dedication, pet owners can help their furry companions manage this condition and enjoy many happy years together.