



WWW.MIDTOWN.VET

1359 E BUTLER AVE

FLAGSTAFF, AZ 86001



928-440-4020



928-396-1171



INFO@MIDTOWN.VET

## CUSHING'S DISEASE

Cushing's disease, also known as **hyperadrenocorticism**, affects many of our older canine patients. Cats can be affected, but it is very rare compared to canines.

Cushing's disease occurs when the body produces too much cortisol, a hormone that helps regulate metabolism and the response to stress. This excess cortisol can cause a range of symptoms that can make your pet uncomfortable.

Symptoms of Cushing's Disease include:

- **Increased thirst and urination**
- **Hair loss / Poor coat health**
- **Skin infections**
- **Muscle atrophy**
- **Muscle weakness**
- **Pot-bellied appearance**
- **Changes in behavior (irritable/grumpy)**

When it comes to treating Cushing's disease, it's important to understand we are managing the symptoms to provide a better quality of life. There is no cure for Cushing's Disease, and research has shown no increase in life expectancy whether you treat the symptoms or not. Many pet's get by without treatment, but their quality of life does diminish over time if the symptoms go untreated.

Treatment for Cushing's is limited, but there is one medication proven to be effective. That medication is known as **Trilostane**, the brand name in veterinary medicine is known as **Vetoryl**. Vetoryl can help control the symptoms of Cushing's. If your pet starts taking this medication, you should see their coat health improve, they should start drinking and urinating a little less, and the muscle atrophy should slow.

You should also plan for veterinary visits every 6 months to reassess their current treatment plan, and make sure we're doing everything we can to keep them as comfortable as possible. While no changes in diet are required, we recommend considering a senior diet, as their joints will need even more help as their muscle tone suffers from the disease.

If you are treating with Vetoryl, and symptoms do not improve, or they return while taking it, schedule a recheck with your veterinarian, as they may want to adjust their dose or check lab work to make sure nothing else is going on. Because Cushing's can cause such a variety of symptoms, it's easier for owners to often shrug off a change in their pet, assuming it's related to an already diagnosed disease. Unfortunately, Cushing's disease does mean a weaker immune system, and it puts your pet at an increased risk of infection. In other words, don't drag your feet on seeking out treatment, even for the small stuff, as your pet may need more help than they used to when it comes to fighting infection and other diseases.

While there is no cure for Cushing's, with proper management, pets with Cushing's disease can lead happy and full lives. We are committed to working with you to develop a treatment plan that meets your pet's unique needs. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or concerns about your pet's health.