



1359 E BUTLER AVE  
FLAGSTAFF, AZ 86001  
928-440-4020  
928-396-1171  
INFO@MIDTOWN.VET

## ADDISON'S DISEASE

Addison's disease, also known as **hypoadrenocorticism**, is a rare but serious condition that affects dogs and cats. It occurs when the adrenal glands fail to produce enough of the hormones that are essential for the body's normal functioning. These hormones include cortisol, aldosterone, and sometimes, dehydroepiandrosterone (DHEA).

Symptoms of Addison's disease can vary, but may include:

- **Lethargy**
- **Vomiting / Diarrhea**
- **Loss of appetite / Weight Loss**
- **Increased thirst and urination**
- **Weakness**
- **Shaking or trembling**
- **Dehydration**
- **Collapse**

### Diagnosing Addison's Disease:

Blood tests are commonly used to diagnose Addison's disease. Your veterinarian may want to see the levels of electrolytes (such as sodium, potassium, and chloride), as well as the levels of cortisol and aldosterone hormones in the blood. Low levels of cortisol and aldosterone, along with high levels of potassium and low levels of sodium, can be indicative of Addison's disease.

In some cases, an imaging test such as an abdominal ultrasound may be performed to check for any abnormalities in the adrenal glands. At the end of the day, it is important to note that diagnosing of Addison's disease can be challenging, as symptoms can be non-specific and may mimic other diseases. Further testing and evaluation may be necessary to confirm a diagnosis.

### Treatment Options:

Treatment for Addison's disease typically involves hormone replacement therapy. This may involve giving your pet daily medications, such as *prednisone* or *fludrocortisone*, to replace the missing hormones. In more severe cases, hospitalization and fluid therapy may be necessary to manage dehydration and electrolyte imbalances.

One of the main things you will need to be cognizant of is your pet's stress levels. As stress causes them to burn through those hormones even faster. So, for example, your pet with Addison's needs to go to a boarding facility, we may want to increase their medication for their stay, to avoid an **Addisonian Crisis. An Addisonian Crisis is a life-threatening situation that results in low blood pressure, low levels of sugar and high blood levels of potassium. It requires IMMEDIATE medical attention.**

Fortunately, with appropriate treatment and management, pets with Addison's disease can live long and happy lives. If you have any questions or concerns about Addison's disease, please do not hesitate to reach out!