

ANIMAL HOSPITAL OF LANESVILLE

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Thyroid Problems in Dogs and Cats

By Dr. Rene Wingerter

Dogs have a tendency to develop a problem called hypothyroidism or a slow thyroid, especially as they get older. Cats have the opposite problem and can become hyperthyroid or have an overactive thyroid due to a tumor when they get older.

A slow thyroid comes on gradually and often goes unnoticed. The signs are usually mild and are attributed to old age. Early signs can be dry, flaky skin, excess shedding, thin hair coat, stiffness, personality changes, weight gain and decreased activity. Some owners just accept this as normal aging in pets, not knowing that there is something they can do about it. All your pet needs is a blood test to determine his thyroid level. If it is low most do very well with a pill once or twice a day for the rest of their lives.

With cats the owners see other problems such as weight loss, an increased appetite and vomiting. Of course there are many other problems that can cause similar symptoms so a good physical exam and blood tests are needed to determine if your cat is hyperthyroid. If she is there are several treatment options from pills to surgery to radioactive iodine treatments.

The most important thing is to keep your pet feeling good. Don't accept old age as a diagnosis of your pet's problems. A yearly exam is never more important than when your pet gets older. Early detection and treatment can add years of fun to your pet's life.

If you have any questions, please call the Animal Hospital of Lanesville at 952-3643. 🐾