

# ANIMAL HOSPITAL OF LANESVILLE

1849 Highway 11 Lanesville, IN 47136 (812) 952-3643

## **Cushing's Disease**

By Dr. Rene Wingerter

There is a disease seen in middle aged to older dogs that can cause them to gain weight, pant, drink and urinate excessively, loose hair and appear bloated. Sometimes they have frequent bouts with bladder infections, diarrhea or skin problems. This disease is called Cushing's Disease. Often, on a yearly exam with basic blood work, the doctor will notice some of these vague symptoms along with elevations in the liver enzymes. If Cushing's Disease is suspected, special blood tests are run. The first test is called a LDDS test and takes 8 hours to perform.

This disease is caused most often by a tumor of the pituitary gland that causes the adrenal glands (small glands that sit on top of the kidneys) to produce increased amounts of cortisone. It can also be due to a tumor of the adrenal glands themselves. There is a second, two hour test to determine where the tumor is. Surgical to remove the tumor is done if possible. If not, your pet is put on medication for the rest of his life. It is a very delicate process to get the correct dose of medication and it is possible this drug could cause a rapid drop in cortisone, which can make your pet very sick. If your pet stops eating or vomits while on the medication, do not give it again until you call your veterinarian. Often your pet's doctor will send home pills to give if this reaction occurs. If vomiting and diarrhea become severe, it may be necessary to put your pet on IV fluids or to keep him in the hospital for several days.

This is a life time disease that requires frequent blood testing and adjustments of the medication, but once well regulated, your pet can live a good life and have a normal life expectancy. If you have

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any questions about Cushing's Disease, please feel free to give us a call at 952-3643. 🐾