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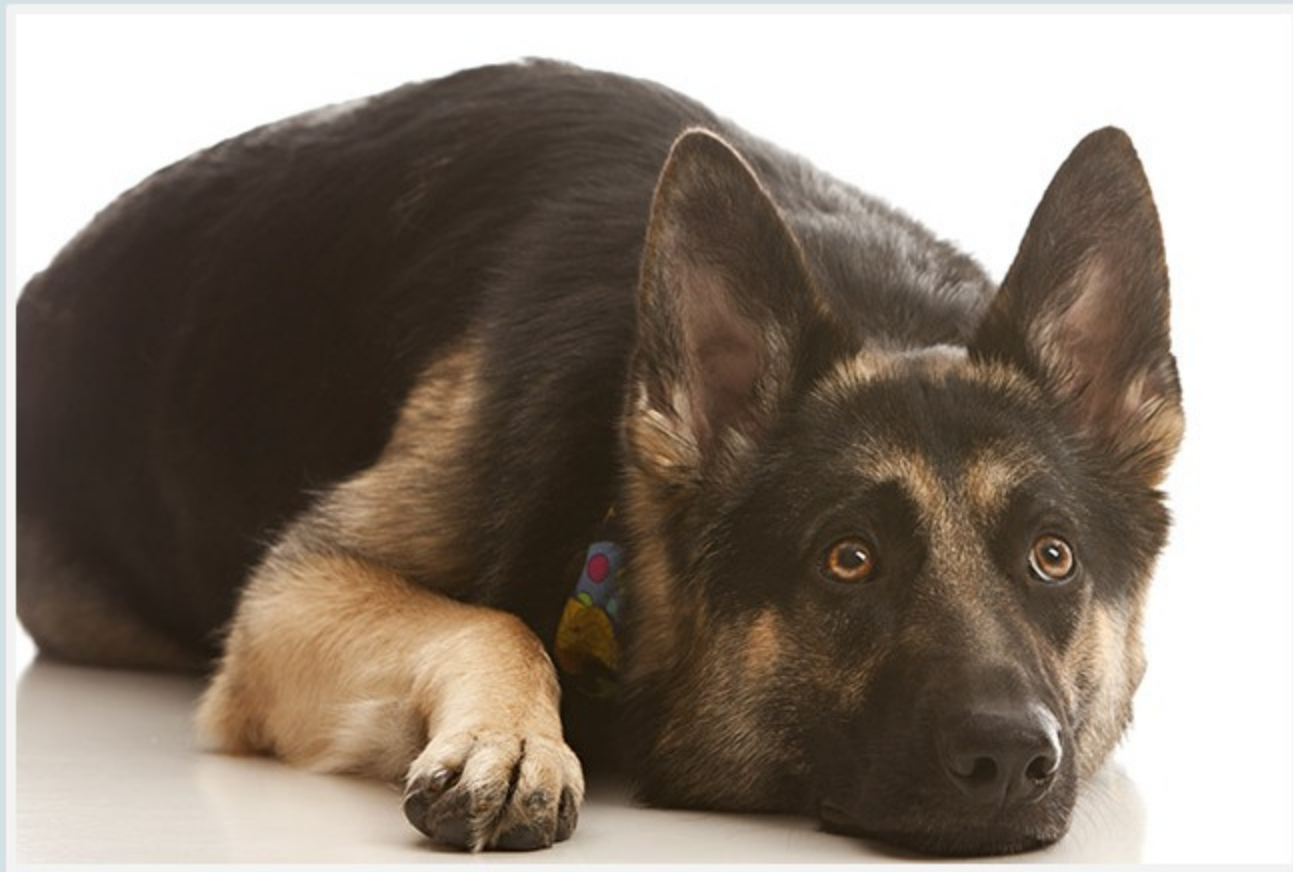
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What Are The Symptoms of Kidney Failure in Dogs?

By Adrienne Warber | Featured on LovetoKnow

There are a number of signs associated with end-stage kidney kidney failure. If your dog has been diagnosed with this condition, it's advisable to educate yourself about what to expect as your pet's illness progresses.

Symptoms of a Dog Suffering from Kidney Failure?

The most common signs of end-stage kidney disease include:

- Uremia: The buildup of waste products in the body that produces a distinctive ammonia smell that is especially apparent on the breath.
Pale, dry gums: The gums are duller and dry to the touch.
Mouth ulcers: Uremia causes raw mouth ulcers that are painful.
Bloodshot eyes: The whites of the eyes are bloodshot.
Increased thirst: An affected dog drinks water excessively.
Dehydration: Despite more fluid intake, the dog is dehydrated.
Decreased appetite: The dog loses interest in food.
Weight loss: The dog steadily loses weight.
Gradual loss of fat and muscle mass: The weight loss affects both fat and muscle mass and can cause emaciation.
Dull coat that sheds excessively: The lackluster coat constantly sheds and looks unkempt.
Lethargy: The dog has little energy or interest in moving around.
Fatigue: He sleeps most of the day and night with only brief periods of wakefulness.
Vomiting: The dog vomits frequently and cannot keep food down.
Anemia: He may develop anemia.
High blood pressure: The dog has an elevated blood pressure.
Incontinence: A dog cannot control urination.
Difficulty breathing: The dog has problems breathing normally.
Slowing heart rate: A faster heart rate is generally present with kidney failure, but the heart rate begins to slow down during the end stage.
Depression: He seems sad and does not respond to any of his favorite things.
Lack of interest in surroundings: The dog is unaware of or disinterested in his surroundings.
Disorientation: He acts confused at times.
Loss of balance and coordination: He appears clumsy and unsteady on his feet.
Trembling or twitching: He has tremors or episodes of trembling.
Seizures: The dog suffers periodic seizures, one of the major signs of end stage kidney failure.

Ways to Help Your Dog

End of Life Treatment Options

When a dog enters end stage kidney failure, the veterinarian may recommend an end of life home treatment plan to make your pet's last days comfortable. In some cases, he may recommend euthanization. The goal of an end of life treatment plan is to maintain the life quality of your pet. For end stage kidney failure, a treatment plan may include dialysis, a stomach tube or intravenous therapy, pain medication and methods to care for an incontinent pet.

A veterinarian may recommend euthanization if a dog is suffering, unresponsive to pain management or too weak to handle necessary life sustaining treatment.

Keeping Your Pet Comfortable

You can help keep your dog comfortable during end stage kidney failure. Here are some ways to help:

- Spend as much time as possible with your dog. Even being in the same room will be soothing to him.
Make sure your dog's resting area is quiet, warm and cozy. Provide him with his favorite blanket and toy.
Protect your pet from other pets or people who may be too rough with him. Supervise interactions with children, and teach them to be gentle with the dog.
Pet your dog and talk to him frequently.
Change your dog's bedding often and keep him clean and dry. Brush his fur for dry cleaning. Clean his fur with a sponge bath solution of hypoallergenic pet shampoo.
If he refuses to eat or has trouble eating, ask the veterinarian about other feeding options such as intravenous feeding.

Dealing with Loss

It can be difficult to come to terms with the fact that a pet is dying. Find comfort in the fact that your dog appreciates your loving care for him in his final days. He knows that you love him and takes comfort in your presence and all that you do to make his life easier. .

Oregon Veterinary Specialty Hospital (OVSH) has been serving the Portland and Beaverton area community since 1979. Drs. Steven F. Skinner (Neurology, Neurosurgery) and Robert T. Franklin (Internal medicine.) We welcome referrals from veterinarians all over the Pacific Northwest. Our goal is to help your pet regain health and live a long and happy life.

Oregon Veterinary Specialty Hospital

Address
9339 SW Beaverton Hillsdale Hwy,
Beaverton, OR 97005.

Phone: 503.292.3001
Fax: 503.292.6808
Email: info@ovshosp.com

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