

# Guidelines at a Glance

Endocrine disease is common in dogs and cats, and the veterinary team must be equipped to not only diagnose and treat these diseases, but also communicate with clients about expectations, prognosis, and course of treatment for illnesses that often require lifelong management. Because of this, diagnosis and treatment of endocrine diseases can present unique challenges.

The AAHA Selected Endocrinopathies of Dogs and Cats Guidelines simplify veterinary clinical practice by providing **quick reference tools** for a step-by-step process to diagnose and treat common endocrine diseases.

## What Diseases Are Covered?

For dogs, the guidelines provide evidence-directed diagnosis and treatment plans for these common diseases:



- Hypothyroidism
- Hypercortisolism (Cushing's syndrome)
- Hypoadrenocorticism (Addison's disease)

For cats, in addition to **hyperthyroidism**, one of the most common feline endocrine diseases, some less common endocrinopathies are also covered:



- Hyperaldosteronism
- Hypothyroidism
- Hypercortisolism

## A Team-Based Approach:

Become an advocate for your endocrine patients by taking a team approach that involves the client and the entire veterinary team. Let clients know your team is here to support them and their pets with these tips from the guidelines:



- Employ low-stress handling strategies for veterinary visits
- Encourage the use of questionnaires for initial visits and follow-ups
- Develop telephone triage skills and resources for client service representatives to schedule appointments for ill patients and those who require monitoring
- Give clients time to process information and let them gather their thoughts



Meet Minnie



3/2/1

## 3 Takeaways



- Certain breeds and active working dogs may have low thyroid hormone concentrations without having thyroid disease—consider these factors before making a diagnosis



- A follow-up questionnaire can help with ongoing monitoring and medication dosage adjustments (see [aaha.org/endocrine-disease](http://aaha.org/endocrine-disease) under Resources for an example)



- For cats with hyperthyroidism, a physical exam and minimum database should be performed at least every 6 months, or more frequently if there are significant comorbidities

## 2 Actions



- Don't forget to evaluate for concurrent diseases



- Empowering veterinary technicians to educate clients about signs of illness, medications, side effects, and follow-up monitoring can streamline appointments

## 1 Thing to Never Forget



- Routine biannual health visits should still be part of the health plan!

Learn how to become an advocate for your endocrine patients at:

[aaha.org/endocrine-disease](http://aaha.org/endocrine-disease).



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