

Kidney disease or failure can be sudden onset (acute) or develop over time (chronic). The signs can be similar, but this handout will address chronic disease management.

Clinical Signs

- Weight loss
- Decreased appetite
- Rough Hair Coat
- Vomiting
- Passing large volumes of urine
- Colorless urine
- Mouth ulcers
- Bad Breath



Stolley Park Veterinary Hospital

3020 W Stolley Park Road

Grand Island NE 68801

(308) 384-6272



Chronic Kidney Disease

Cause of chronic kidney disease is largely unknown; it is thought in part to be genetically programmed

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*A question
of management*



Diagnosis

Diagnosis of chronic kidney disease is based on clinical signs and blood test results. Pets with poorly functioning kidneys have some or all of the following:

- Elevated kidney values (BUN/Creatinine)
- Low urine specific gravity (dilute urine)
- Anemia
- Elevated Phosphorus
- Small kidneys



Fluid Therapy

- Initial diagnosis is usually made when the pet is feeling ill, so immediate treatment is often intravenous (in the vein) fluids for 2-3 days in the hospital.
- If the blood values improve, maintenance fluid therapy can be continued
- This involves fluids placed under the skin on a once to twice weekly basis.
- This can be done at the clinic or at home

Therapy

Chronic Kidney Disease
is not curable

The key to management of kidney disease is creating a *good quality of life* through fluid therapy and diet.

Diet

A specific low protein diet is recommended to reduce the kidneys workload. The less stress the kidneys have, the better they will work.

Medications

If Phosphorus values get too high, this can be dangerous for the body. In some cases, a medication to bind phosphorus will be prescribed. If there is protein in the urine, we may use a medication called an ACE inhibitor.

Rechecks

The frequency of recheck blood tests depends on severity of disease and response to fluid therapy. They can be every few weeks initially, up to every 6 months if good blood levels are maintained.