

# Important Facts about Kidney Disease in Cats and Dogs

- An estimated 1 in 3 cats and 1 in 10 dogs is likely to develop kidney disease in their lifetime. Recent studies suggest kidney disease is even more common and until now has been under-recognized.
- Your veterinarian is your best partner in helping protect your pet's kidney function and will work with you to manage your pet's health.
- Kidney disease can be subtle. Make sure to report any changes in your pet's behavior, eating, drinking, peeing, or pooping to help your veterinarian monitor changes in your pet's condition.
- Dehydration can make kidney disease worse, so your veterinarian may give you tips for keeping your pet hydrated. Never reduce access to fresh water unless directed by your veterinarian!
- Pet Health Network's parent company, IDEXX, has a new SDMA blood test that enables the identification of chronic kidney disease in cats and dogs months or even years earlier than traditional methods. Ask your veterinarian about screening your cats and dogs with this test today.

## Learn More

For more information about chronic kidney disease and keeping your pet happy and healthy for as long as possible, visit [pethealthnetwork.com](http://pethealthnetwork.com).



Pet Health Network



[pethealthnetwork.com](http://pethealthnetwork.com)



What Do at least  
1 in 3 Cats and 1 in 10  
Dogs Have in Common?

Chronic Kidney Disease  
and Your Pet

## What is kidney disease?

Your pet's kidneys play an important part in filtering and removing waste from their body. Kidney disease occurs when something causes these functions to be compromised and it typically falls into two categories:

- **Acute kidney injury**—an abrupt decline in kidney function
- **Chronic kidney disease (CKD)**—a slow decline in kidney function over time

## Why should I care about kidney disease?

It's estimated that about 1 in 3 cats<sup>1</sup> and 1 in 10 dogs<sup>2</sup> will develop kidney disease in their lifetime. Recent studies suggest kidney disease is even more common and until now has been under-recognized.<sup>3,4</sup> Early detection is best, so it's great to be prepared and looking for problems early.

## What causes chronic kidney disease?

CKD can happen for a variety of reasons, including kidney stones, infection, toxins, injury, genetic abnormalities, cancer, and others. If kidney disease is suspected, your veterinarian will work with you to determine the underlying cause of the disease and create the best treatment or management plan for your pet.

## What are the signs of chronic kidney disease?

Kidney disease can be subtle, often showing few or no signs in its early stages. If your pet is diagnosed with CKD, let your veterinarian know as soon as possible if you notice any changes in your pet's behavior, eating, drinking, peeing, or pooping habits.

## How will I know if my pet has kidney disease?

Regular checkups and screenings are an important part of catching kidney disease as early as possible. Your veterinarian will work with you to determine your pet's kidney function on a regular basis depending on their symptoms, age, and other factors.

## What does it mean if my pet gets chronic kidney disease?

If your cat or dog has been diagnosed with chronic kidney disease, don't panic. The good news is that you've caught it and can work together with your veterinarian to investigate the underlying cause and determine the best course of action for you and your pet. Some pets with CKD can live happily for years after diagnosis with a good quality of life.

## What is the treatment for chronic kidney disease?

General treatment for pets with chronic kidney disease often include:<sup>5</sup>

- Feeding a high-quality, kidney-supportive diet, often as wet food to help with hydration.
- Keeping plenty of fresh water available—this is essential—and enticing your pet to drink.
- Administering additional fluids under the skin when your pet is not drinking enough.
- Treating high blood pressure, if necessary.
- Treating significant urinary protein loss, if noted.
- Using medications to lower blood phosphorus levels, if increased.
- Monitoring closely and adjusting for changes or worsening.

## Once my pet is diagnosed with CKD, what's the long-term management and monitoring plan?

As your pet ages and his or her condition changes, different diets, medications, or additional fluids may be needed. Because of this, your veterinarian will work with you to recheck your pet's kidney function with blood and urine tests to monitor their condition closely. With early chronic kidney disease, your pet may need a recheck only two or three times a year; more visits are often helpful as the disease progresses.

Please consult your veterinarian before administering medications or over-the-counter supplements as they may be harmful to the kidneys. Being a vigilant caretaker and scheduling regular rechecks will help find important changes in your pet's status, both inside and out. Your pet will likely benefit from the good teamwork by living longer and enjoying more quality days, so it's worth the effort!



### References

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5. Polzin DJ, Osborne CA, Ross S. Evidence-based management of CKD. In: Bonagura JD, Twedt DC, eds. *Kirk's Current Veterinary Therapy XIV.* 14th ed. St Louis, MO: Saunders; 2009:872-879.

