

# CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE *FAST FIVE*

Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) is an often slow but progressive and irreversible loss of kidney function. Read the Fast Five on this illness to know the risks for your pet.

## *WHO* IS AT RISK?

Cats and dogs of any age can develop CKD. It **affects cats three times more often than dogs**, and older animals are more likely to be diagnosed.

## *WHY* DO CATS AND DOGS GET IT?

Many different things cause CKD including **inherited illnesses, toxin exposure, infections and some types of cancer**. Slow damage to the kidneys can go undetected for long periods of time. Consequently, the exact cause of an individual pet's CKD is often unknown.

## *WHAT* DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

Symptoms of CKD only appear after about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of kidney function is lost. This means that dogs and cats can appear completely normal in the early stages of their illness. When there is no longer enough functioning kidney tissue to meet an animal's needs, you may see **weight loss, poor hair coat, appetite loss, vomiting, increased drinking and urination, lethargy, dehydration and increased susceptibility to infection**.

## *HOW* IS IT TREATED?

Loss of kidney function in CKD is not reversible, but an animal's health and comfort can be managed, and their life extended with **therapeutic diets, hydration therapy, appetite stimulation, nausea suppression and medication to control blood pressure**.

## *WHEN* TO ACT

Mature dogs and cats can be screened for early kidney disease once or twice a year at their wellness checkups. Screening is performed using blood and urine tests. **If you notice changes in your pet's appetite, drinking or urination habits, or if they experience unexplained weight loss**, it is time to visit your veterinarian.

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