

Polyuria and Polydipsia

Overview

The term polydipsia refers to excessive thirst manifested by excessive water intake, which in turn usually leads to polyuria, which is the formation and excretion of a large volume of urine. Polydipsia and polyuria are early signs of several diseases including kidney failure or infection, diabetes, pyometra (uterine infection), liver disease, high blood calcium and others.

Dogs and cats normally take in about 20 to 40 milliliters per pound of body weight per day, or 3 cups per day for a 20 pound dog or 2.5 cups per day for a 10 pound cat. This includes any water they take in with their food, such as in canned food. Anything more than that, under normal environmental conditions, is considered polydipsia.

Diagnosis and Treatment Notes:

- Polyuria and polydipsia is typically diagnosed through history and physical examination. Increased water consumption can be done by measuring the exact amount of water that is consumed per day. Determining the cause of the increased thirst and urination requires further testing such as bloodwork, urinalysis, x-rays, specialized blood tests or even CT or MRI.
- Treatment depends on the underlying cause, your individual pet, and your veterinarian. Treatment may include intravenous fluid therapy, insulin, or even surgery. Discuss treatment details when your pet is diagnosed with this condition.

What to Watch for*:

- Drinking large amounts of water
- Frequent urinations
- Change in appetite
- Change in behavior
- Lethargy
- Vomiting/diarrhea
- Weakness

** Please notify us if you notice any of the above signs or if you have any questions!*