

Understanding Primary Hyperlipidemia in Dogs

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Primary hyperlipidemia is a condition characterized by elevated levels of lipids in the blood, even after fasting. This condition can often be overlooked as some breeds, like the miniature Schnauzer, may appear clinically normal but still exhibit hyperlipidemia. Identifying and managing primary hyperlipidemia is crucial to prevent potential health issues before clinical signs become apparent.

What is Primary Hyperlipidemia?

Primary hyperlipidemia is a genetic disorder that leads to an abnormal accumulation of lipids in the blood. Unlike secondary hyperlipidemia, which can be caused by factors like diet, obesity, or underlying diseases, primary hyperlipidemia is inherent to the animal's genetic makeup.

Key Diagnostic Tests

To diagnose primary hyperlipidemia, veterinarians can perform several tests, including:

- **Serum Triglyceride and Cholesterol Levels:** Measuring these levels after a 12-hour fast can help identify hyperlipidemia.
- **Complete Blood Count (CBC) and Chemistry Panel:** These tests provide a comprehensive overview of your pet's health.
- **Thyroid Function Test:** Ensures the thyroid gland is functioning correctly.
- **Cortisol Test:** Checks for conditions like Cushing's disease.
- **Imaging (Radiographs and Ultrasound):** Visual assessment of internal organs to identify abnormalities.

Why Early Detection Matters

Detecting primary hyperlipidemia early is essential to manage and prevent potential health problems. Regular veterinary check-ups and additional diagnostic tests can help rule out this condition before any clinical signs appear.

Conclusion

Primary hyperlipidemia may be a silent condition, but with the right approach and timely diagnostics, veterinarians can ensure your pet stays healthy and happy. Always consult with your veterinarian if you notice any unusual signs in your pet or if you belong to a breed known to have this condition.