

I don't have a diagnosis – what are the symptoms?



SYMPTOMS

Vomiting
Diarrhea
Lethargy
Depression
Lack of appetite
Tremors or shaking
Muscle weakness
Pain in hind quarters

The symptoms of Addison's disease can be vague. More importantly, they are similar to the symptoms of many different problems. Initially, the dog may be listless, or seem depressed. Many dogs are described as just seeming off, or losing the normal sparkle in their eye. Lack of appetite is a good indicator. Other symptoms include gastro-intestinal problems like vomiting and diarrhea. Pain in the hindquarters, or generalized muscle weakness such as a dog that can't jump onto the bed or couch as he has done in the past is not uncommon. Shivering or muscle tremors may also be present. The most important thing to remember is that you know your dog better than anyone. If something seems amiss, have it checked out.

These symptoms may wax and wane over months or years making diagnosis difficult. If the adrenals continue deteriorating, ultimately the dog will have an acute episode called an Addisonian crisis. Potassium levels elevate and disrupt normal function of the heart. Arrhythmias can result and blood pressure drops to dangerously low levels. BUN and creatinine levels, generally indicators of kidney function, are often elevated. At this point many animals are diagnosed with renal failure, as the kidneys are unable to function properly. Typically animals are given IV solutions for rehydration, which may produce an almost miraculous recovery. This too, is a great indication that failure of the adrenals rather than of the kidneys is creating the symptoms.

Source: <http://www.addisondogs.com/addisons/whatis.html>