

SO YOUR DOG WAS DIAGNOSED WITH TYPICAL ADDISON'S DISEASE

For Dogs on Florinef/Fludrocortisone/Astonin-H (Daily Pills)

When your dog comes home:

- 1) Please remember to breathe. Dogs live long, normal lives with Addison's as long as they receive their medications, which need careful adjustment until you find the best doses for your dog.
- 2) Make sure your dog always has access to water. They need to be hydrated for the medications to work properly. Any urine accidents or leaking will be resolved as the medications are adjusted.
- 3) Your dog may not have an interest in food right away. Tempt them with things they like that are not fatty. Some good choices are lean meats, skinless chicken breast, scrambled eggs, & rice. Gradually reintroduce their normal foods. You might need to change their bowl if they associate it with being sick. There is no special diet for an Addison's dog, but avoid excessively fatty foods.
- 4) Your dog may be tired at first. Recovering from an Addisonian crisis is like a human recovering from surgery. Once the medications start working, your dog will start to regain his or her strength. Let your dog be your guide. Start slowly and build up his or her activity.
- 5) Set up a file with all test results to help track your dog's progress. You can also ask for a copy of the vet's notes from their file. This is valuable to be able to refer back to or to bring along if you ever need to see a different vet.

Daily:

- 1) It is suggested that dogs receive their Florinef/Fludrocortisone/Astonin-H in 2 separate doses each day, with food. The recommended starting dose is 0.1mg for every 10lbs or 5kg. This dose often needs to be increased, so frequent monitoring of the electrolytes is important.
- 2) Check the bottle or product insert for storage instructions to see if your prescription requires refrigeration. Some do and some don't.
- 3) Most dogs on these drugs do not require Prednisone, Prednisolone, Hydrocortisone, Cortisone Acetate, or any additional glucocorticoid. However, it may be prescribed initially to help recover from the crisis.

First Month:

- 1) One week after starting Florinef/Fludrocortisone/Astonin-H, test the electrolytes ("lytes"), which are sodium (Na) and potassium (K), to make sure the dose is adequate.
- 2) Electrolytes should continue to be checked weekly until the optimal dose is found.
- 3) You want the sodium in its reference range but not too low. You want the potassium in the middle of its reference range. Reference ranges are the numbers that state what the normal values are. For example: Potassium 3.5-5.8 means that potassium is considered normal between 3.5 and 5.8. In this example, you want the potassium to be 4.6 or 4.7. The dose of

Florinef/Fludrocortisone/Astonin H can be reduced if the potassium is lower than that. The dose needs to be increased when the potassium is higher than that.

Second Month and forward:

- 1) Some dogs will need increases in the amount of Florinef/Fludrocortisone/Astonin-H. If your dog is acting "off," check the electrolytes & ask your vet about making any necessary adjustments.
- 2) Any time a dose is changed, check the electrolytes 5-7 days later to make sure that the change in dose has had the desired effect.
- 3) Once the optimal dose is reached, electrolytes should continue to be checked every 3-6 months.

Please note: Since there is a glucocorticoid component included in Florinef/Fludrocortisone/Astonin-H, NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as Rimadyl, Metacam, Meloxicam, & others) are not safe because they can lead to kidney damage and stomach ulcers. Instead, Prednisone is typically used as an anti-inflammatory drug and Tramadol or Gabapentin are often used for pain.

Dogs with Typical Addison's should not be given Pedialyte or Gatorade-type products because they contain potassium.