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Clinic Hours :
Monday-Friday 9am-7pm
Saturday 9am-12noon
Sunday 10.30am-2.30pm
24 hours Emergency Service

DOES YOUR DOG DRINK TOO MUCH?

Excessive thirst, or polydipsia, is a common problem we see in veterinary practice. Consumption of over 90ml/kg/day of water is considered excessive. For example, a typical 15kg beagle consuming over 1500ml water/day would be classed as polydipsic.

An owner may first be alerted to the problem by their dog draining a normally full water bowl, or seeking water from unusual sources such as puddles, plant pots, or even toilets and shower recesses! Of course, because they are drinking more, polydipsic dogs will urinate more than usual-this may sometimes be confused with incontinence.

There are a number of possible causes of polydipsia. In younger animals, congenital conditions such as diabetes insipidus (water diabetes), or kidney problems may be involved. In the middle-aged to older animal, kidney or liver disease, diabetes mellitus (high bloods sugar levels), an over- or under-active adrenal gland, infections (particularly infected uterus in the entire bitch) and even pain may be responsible.

To help determine the cause of excessive thirst, we often ask owners to measure the 24hr water intake of their dog. We will then collect a urine sample, which we can test to determine how well the urine is being concentrated, and also to check for the presence of glucose, blood or infection. A blood sample will probably be also required as part of the initial work up.

Should you notice polydipsia in your dog, it is important not to restrict his/her water intake, as this may lead to dehydration, Instead seek prompt veterinary attention. Early detection of the underlying cause will result in improved long term management and a happier, healthier pet.