Addison's disease (Hypoadrenocorticism) in dogs

HEALTH STUDY RESULTS

What is Addison's disease?
Addison's disease is caused by decreased hormone production from the outer part of the adrenal gland. Although Addison's disease is uncommon, affected dogs can present in a critical condition requiring emergency treatment.

What factors are associated with Addison's disease diagnosis?

CONCLUSIONS:
Addison’s disease is not very common in dogs overall. However, some breeds are highly affected.

Many of the clinical signs of Addison’s disease are poorly specific, making it challenging for veterinarians to diagnose.

Addison's disease can be severe and requires life-long treatment.

Standard Poodles are particularly prone to Addison's disease. Owners of Standard poodles should be alert for the typical signs of Addison's disease and contact their vet if concerned.

Addison's disease in dogs under UK primary veterinary care: Frequency, clinical approaches and risk factors
Schofield et al. (2021) Journal of Small Animal Practice

Number of UK dogs in study: 905,543
Average age at first diagnosis: 5.2 years
Percentage of UK dogs with Addison's disease: 0.06%
Percentage of UK Standard Poodles with Addison's disease: 2.3%

Most common clinical signs of Addison’s disease:

- Lethargy
- Not eating
- Vomiting
- Muscle tremors
- Diarrhoea
- Weight loss
- Weakness
- Not drinking

5.2 years

57.7 72.7 77.3
45.5 77.7 87.9
28.8 75.8 75.8

76% of Addison's cases required immediate stabilisation and hospitalisation.

Relative breed risk compared to crossbreeds:

- Standard Poodle: 51.4 x
- Labradoodle: 7.4 x
- West Highland White Terrier: 5.8 x
- Labrador: -1.3 x

Dogs aged 4 to 9 years had 2.1 x the risk of Addison's disease compared to dogs less than 4 years.

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BREED
AGEMORE

RVC VetCompass carries out welfare research based on anonymised clinical information shared from over 30% of UK veterinary practices. We are very grateful to the owners and veterinary professionals who contribute to VetCompass research.

https://www.rvc.ac.uk/vetcompass

Schofield et al. (2021) "Hypoadrenocorticism in dogs under UK primary veterinary care: Frequency, clinical approaches and risk factors" Journal of Small Animal Practice