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2010 AAHA Diabetes Management Guidelines for Dogs and Cats

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Renee Rucinsky, DVM, ABVP (Feline) (Chair) | Audrey Cook, BVM&S, MRCVS, Diplomate ACVIM-SAIM, Diplomate ECVIM-CA | Steve Haley, DVM | Richard Nelson, DVM, Diplomate ACVIM | Debra L. Zoran, DVM, PhD, Diplomate ACVIM | Melanie Poundstone, DVM, ABVP

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Introduction

Diabetes mellitus (DM) is a treatable condition that requires a committed effort by veterinarian and client. This document provides current recommendations for the treatment of diabetes in dogs and cats. Treatment of DM is a combination of art and science, due in part to the many factors that affect the diabetic state and the animal's response. Each animal needs individualized, frequent reassessment, and treatment may be modified based on response.

In both dogs and cats, DM is caused by loss or dysfunction of pancreatic beta cells. In the dog, beta cell loss tends to be rapid and progressive, and it is usually due to immune-mediated destruction, vacuolar degeneration, or pancreatitis.¹ Intact females may be transiently diabetic due to the insulin-resistant effects of the diestrus phase. In the cat, loss or dysfunction of beta cells is the result of insulin resistance, islet amyloidosis, or chronic lymphoplasmacytic pancreatitis.²

Risk factors for both dogs and cats include insulin resistance caused by obesity, other diseases (e.g., acromegaly in cats,