

Northern Oaks

Bird & Animal Hospital

Epilepsy

Your pet has been diagnosed with epilepsy. This is a manageable condition that will affect your pet for the remainder of its life. It is important to remember that most pets can live a long healthy life with proper management of their epilepsy.

Definition: Epilepsy is the condition of having recurring seizures with or without a known cause.

Treatment: Epilepsy is a condition that cannot be cured but can be managed. If your pet is a female, the first step is to spay her because estrogen cycles can increase the number of seizures in female epileptic animals. The next step is to obtain a complete lab chemistry to assure that organ dysfunction, such as liver disease, is not responsible for the seizures. If the lab work is normal the pet is then placed on anti-seizure medication. Because it takes several weeks for the medication to reach therapeutic levels, your pet may still experience seizures during this time. Because most drugs are metabolized in the liver and kidneys, your pet will need a yearly blood panel to assure that these organs are properly functioning.

If a pet fails to achieve seizure control on a single drug alone, an additional drug may be added. The same monitoring requirements will exist with multiple drug usage.

Complications: Some pets will be very groggy when they are first beginning antiepileptic therapy. It is a normal response and most cases of grogginess will resolve by 2 weeks, but the dosage may be decreased by the veterinarian if the lethargy is extreme. Please do not cease administering the medication without consulting your veterinarian. Some animals will still have infrequent breakthrough seizures but the goal of therapy is to reduce the seizures to as seldom as possible. Occasionally, excitement and nervousness may trigger seizure episodes.