What causes hyperadrenocorticism?
Hyperadrenocorticism occurs when the body makes too much of the stress hormone cortisol; an abnormality of the pituitary gland or adrenal glands (near the kidney) is usually involved.

Tell your veterinarian about any drug or supplement you are giving to your pet or treating your pet with, as some products may create a condition similar to hyperadrenocorticism, although this is rare.

What could signal that your pet might have this disease?
A combination of 2 or more of the following could be a sign your pet has hyperadrenocorticism:

- **Signs**
  - More frequent drinking or urination
  - Panting
  - Weakness
  - Recurring skin or bladder infections
- **Laboratory investigation**
  - A higher-than-normal liver value called ALP, especially if higher than other liver values
  - Higher-than-normal blood sugar
  - High amounts of cholesterol or fat in the blood
  - Urine that is more watery (ie, dilute) than expected

Why is it important to test for this disease?
Many signs of “old age” may really be signs of hyperadrenocorticism. Treating the disease may make your pet feel much better and stop some of the signs. Treatment can increase the length of your pet’s life.

If your pet’s hyperadrenocorticism is not treated, he or she may be more likely to suffer from:
- Skin and bladder infections
- Knee (stifle) injuries
- Kidney disease
- High blood pressure
- Increased chance of getting blood clots, especially in the lungs
- Problems while under anesthesia

How does the veterinarian confirm that my pet has hyperadrenocorticism?
Hyperadrenocorticism can sometimes be confirmed with a single test; however, because no one test is perfect for diagnosing this disease, a combination of tests may be needed. Your veterinarian will note which test is best to perform on your pet.

In order to screen for hyperadrenocorticism, your veterinarian may suggest a urine test called a urine cortisol:creatinine ratio (UCCR). If the test result is negative, your pet does not have hyperadrenocorticism; if the result is positive, other testing will be needed.

If your pet is likely to have hyperadrenocorticism, a low-dose dexamethasone suppression (LDDS) test is performed. This can help the veterinary team diagnose hyperadrenocorticism and determine what part of the body is causing the disease.

Another test that may be performed is an ACTH stimulation test. This test might be recommended first if the veterinary team is unable to take the full 8 hours needed for the LDDS test or for other medical reasons.

Your veterinarian recommends this test at this time:
- [ ] UCCR
- [ ] LDDS test
- [ ] ACTH stimulation test
- [ ] Other: _____________________________________________________

Approximate cost: ____________________________________________

How is hyperadrenocorticism treated?
This disease is usually treated with medication. In some cases, surgery might be recommended. Your veterinarian will provide additional information about treatment options and an individualized treatment plan for your pet.