



# Health Concerns in Toy Breeds

## Hypoglycemia

Hypoglycemia simply means low blood sugar. This can even occur in otherwise healthy puppies due to a lack of nutrition. Because yorkies have such little reserve, they must never miss a meal. If they do not eat, their blood sugar will drop to a dangerous level and **this could cause death.**

Signs of Hypoglycemia:

- Lethargy/Refusal to eat
- Vomiting/Diarrhea
- Shock or coma-like state

If your puppy is acting lethargic, place an inch of Nutri-Stat®/Nutrical® or a teaspoon of honey or corn syrup in it's mouth. If the puppy is not returning to normal activity within 15-30 minutes or its condition worsens you must **seek medical attention immediately.** Your veterinarian may need to give IV fluids with sugar to the puppy depending on its condition and how low the blood sugar has dropped.

To entice a small yorkie to eat you may try:

- Soaking food in warm water or broth
- High quality canned food (Hill's **a/d** or Science Diet puppy canned)
- A small amount of Nutri-Stat® or Nutrical® on the food
- Yogurt – plain, vanilla or banana flavored

Sometimes experimentation is the key!

## Liver Shunt

Liver shunt or portosystemic shunt is a congenital malformation of the liver that causes blood to bypass the liver while traveling from the GI tract to general circulation. One of the liver's many functions is to maintain the body's blood sugar level. Because blood is not circulating through the liver properly, hypoglycemia or low blood sugar may follow. This condition can sometimes be cured with surgery. A liver function blood test such as bile acid testing is needed to diagnosis this condition.<sup>1</sup>

## Legg-Calve-Perthes Syndrome

Legg-Calve-Perthes Disease (LCP) is a disorder of hip joint conformation. It is most often seen in the miniature and toy breeds between the ages of 4 months to a year. LCP results when the blood supply to the femoral head is interrupted resulting in the death of the bone cells. As the body tries to bring the blood supply back to the bone, the femoral head may become irregular or collapse. This does not allow the joint to function properly and causes stiffness and pain. LCP is believed to be an inherited disease, although the mode of inheritance is not known. Treatment and recovery varies on the severity of the disease. Treatment options may include strict rest, splinting or surgery.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [www.veterinarypartner.com](http://www.veterinarypartner.com) "Toy Breed Hypoglycemia"

<sup>2</sup> [www.offa.org](http://www.offa.org) "General Legg-Calve-Perthes Information"