HYPOGLYCEMIA

This is a central nervous system disorder caused by low blood sugar. It occurs mainly in toy breeds between six and twelve weeks of age because they don't have the fat reserves to draw on when they are stressed. Hypoglycemia can occur without warning when a puppy is placed in a new home or while being shipped. It might appear after a puppy misses a meal, gets chilled or becomes exhausted from too much playing or has a digestive upset. These upsets place an added strain on the energy reserves of the liver and brings on symptoms.

The first signs are listlessness and depression. They are followed by muscular weakness, vomiting or diarrhea, facial tremors and later convulsions, coma and death. The entire sequence is not always seen. The dog may simply appear to be lethargic or may be weak, wobbly, and jerky or he may be found in a coma.

PREVENTION:

When you bring your puppy home, do not overtire them or allow them to get chilled. Supervise meals and make sure your puppy eats something at every meal. Toy pups should eat three meals a day until they are at least 12 weeks old. Keep the first few days low key and don't introduce them to everyone in the neighborhood to reduce the stress of adjusting to a new environment. In the first few days your pup is home, if you are concerned he is not eating much, give him/her a drop of honey, syrup or sugar water in his mouth once a day. Only a drop…too much sweet will give him diarrhea.

TREATMENT:

Treatment is three-fold: sugar, water, warmth. The first thing to do is restore blood glucose levels. Begin at once by putting a drop of honey on your pup's tongue. Your pups should begin to improve within 30 minutes. Wrap the pup in a warm blanket and, if the pup is able to swallow on its own, drop water off your fingertip into your pups mouth to help rehydrate it. Make sure the pup swallows it and doesn't choke on it. Often pups with low blood sugar are also dehydrated. If your pup is not perking up within an hour after treatment, call your vet and get your pup more advanced treatment.