



## Hill's Expanded Voluntary Recall – Diagnostic Reimbursement

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March 20, 2019

Dear Colleague,

Hill's recognizes that pet parents may have concerns about the health of their pets. All pets should be assessed on a case-by-case basis to evaluate their individual health, to gain an understanding of how much voluntarily recalled product they may have consumed and over what period of time, and to assess any health risks they may face.

To support veterinarians in their relationships with their clients and their pets and as an expression of our empathy for pet parents, Hill's will evaluate on a case-by-case basis, requests for **reimbursement of veterinary fees** including specific diagnostic tests and treatment for dogs who have eaten the voluntarily recalled diets and where the veterinarian recommends diagnostic tests and treatment for hypervitaminosis D.

Pet parents may receive reimbursement for diagnostic tests up to \$400 per patient to test for elevated calcium and up to an additional \$400 per patient (\$800 total) to complete a vitamin D panel if indicated. Hill's will pay for periodic, continued testing of dogs with elevated vitamin D until the levels normalize, up to one year. Appropriate costs to include in the reimbursement are for an office visit and physical examination, serum blood chemistry & urinalysis, and vitamin D panel if indicated. Further tests and medical treatment based on your clinical judgment may be required. The reimbursement instructions and forms are attached. Please ensure all required materials are returned for reimbursement.

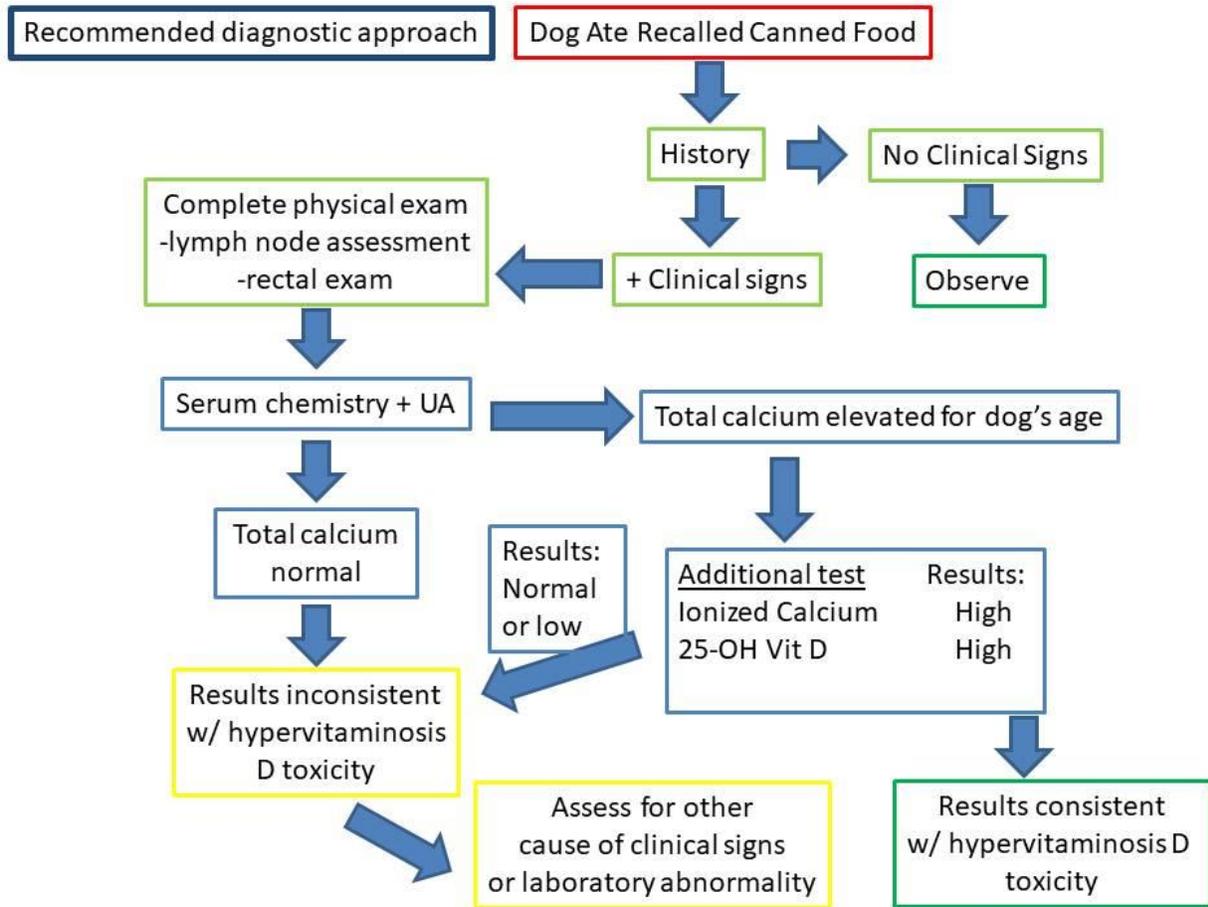
For more information, please contact the Hill's Veterinary Consultation Service at 1-800-548-8387 or email [vet\\_consult@hillspet.com](mailto:vet_consult@hillspet.com), or submit a case for VCS input at [www.hillsvet.com/VCS](http://www.hillsvet.com/VCS).

Sincerely,

Jill Zigomanis, DVM

Professional Veterinary Affairs Manager – Hill's Canada

## Diagnosis and Treatment for Hypervitaminosis D (Global)



### Diagnostic Approach

Minimum recommendation for dogs that have consumed recalled canned product:

- Always recommend **discontinuing** recalled canned canine product
- History - perform a nutritional assessment and ask questions to identify potential clinical signs associated with excessive vitamin D intake including lethargy, inappetence, anorexia, vomiting, diarrhea, polyuria/polydipsia. See link for brief diet history from: <https://www.wsava.org/Guidelines/Global-Nutrition-Guidelines>
- Physical examination - a thorough physical examination to include hydration status, joint pain (growing puppies), and other associated findings that may occur in dogs with hypercalcemia
- Serum chemistries - to detect hypercalcemia and/or azotemia and determine serum phosphorus

- Urinalysis - to detect hyposthenuria [urine specific gravity (USG) < 1.008] or inappropriately concentrated USG (< 1.030) with concomitant azotemia

If results of initial screening (items above) are normal, have the owner continue to observe and contact you if there are any abnormal findings.

**If hypercalcemia exists** (total serum calcium above upper reference range for the dog's age), we suggest measuring ionized calcium in the fasting dog and considering all potential causes (excessive vitamin D intake; neoplasia - lymphoma, anal gland adenocarcinoma, others; primary hyperparathyroidism; hypoadrenocorticism, etc.) and performing appropriate tests to exclude concurrent primary diseases. Younger dogs (generally < 1 year) will have higher total calcium concentrations than older dogs.

If you suspect **dietary-induced hypercalcemia** (high ionized calcium), we recommend submitting serum or plasma (according to laboratory guidelines) for measurement of 25-hydroxyvitamin D

Findings consistent with excessive vitamin D intake include the following changes in serum concentrations:

- Increased total and ionized calcium considering the dog's age
- Increased 25-OH vitamin D (expect results in 7 days)

## **Treatment Recommendations**

Treatment is indicated in dogs with clinical signs of hypercalcemia that have increased ionized and total calcium concentrations.

If the Ca x P product is > 70 for mature dogs or > 80 for young growing dogs, begin treatment to protect against soft tissue mineralization. This calculation is unlikely to be beneficial in acute vitamin D ingestion.

Finding increased ionized calcium alone, in the absence of clinical signs, is not consistent with hypervitaminosis D secondary to food consumption. Therapies listed below may not be necessary in dogs with moderately increased total or ionized calcium that do not have clinical signs and are eating normally. Discontinuation of feeding recalled canine canned product and close observation is recommended for those patients.

## **Suggested Therapeutic Approach**

- **The goal of treatment is to enhance urinary excretion of calcium and prevent calcium resorption from bone.**
- If cardiac function and blood pressure are normal, begin intravenous treatment with 0.9% sodium chloride at 100-125 ml/kg/day to correct dehydration and provide moderate volume expansion.

- Reassess serum calcium concentration every 24 hours to evaluate the effectiveness of fluid therapy and adjust the fluid rate based on hydration status, including PCV and TPP, and serum electrolyte concentrations.
- If serum calcium does not decrease and the patient is well hydrated, administer a bisphosphonate such as pamidronate disodium. Pamidronate is dosed at 1.3 – 2.2 mg/kg IV diluted in 0.9% sodium chloride over 2-4 hours and may be repeated in 3-4 days in non-responsive patients.
- Depending on the degree of hypercalcemia, consider adding a glucocorticoid such as prednisone (1 mg/kg BW orally every 12 hours) when the bisphosphonate is administered. This may work as an adjunct or provide additional protection until the bisphosphonate effects are apparent.
- The use of furosemide is currently reserved for severe hypercalcemia as dehydration may become pronounced.
- If calcium levels normalize, IV fluids can be weaned. Oral prednisone should be continued for an additional 1-2 weeks and can be slowly weaned at that time. Calcium levels should be monitored daily for 96 hours (4 days) after fluid cessation. It is recommended to continue monitoring serum calcium every 2-3 days during the prednisone weaning process to ensure calcium levels remain normal.

## References

[Pet Poison Helpline. www.petpoisonhelpline.com](http://www.petpoisonhelpline.com)

<https://www.merckvetmanual.com/endocrine-system/the-parathyroid-glands-and-disorders-of-calcium-metabolism/hypercalcemia-in-dogs-and-cats>



# Hill's Expanded Voluntary Recall Diagnostic Reimbursement Request Instructions

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Hill's recognizes that pet parents may have concerns about the health of their pets. All pets should be assessed on a case-by-case basis to evaluate their individual health, to gain an understanding of how much voluntarily recalled product they may have consumed and over what period of time, and to assess any health risks they may face.

To support veterinarians in their relationships with their clients and their pets and as an expression of our empathy for pet parents, Hill's will evaluate on a case by case basis, requests for reimbursement of veterinary fees including specific diagnostic tests and treatment for dogs who have eaten the voluntarily recalled diets and where the veterinarian recommends diagnostic tests and treatment for hypervitaminosis D.

## *Qualifying conditions*

- Patient was fed one (or more) voluntarily recalled canned dog food products
- The voluntarily recalled food was purchased between September 1, 2018 and March 21, 2019
- Only one reimbursement per patient (duplicate submissions will not be honored)
- Reimbursement requests will be reviewed for voluntarily recalled products in the Canada
- A completed 'Patient reimbursement request form' and all supporting documentation included on the 'Reimbursement checklist' must be submitted

## *Reimbursement process*

- Complete the 'Patient reimbursement request form' (will be sent separately). Be sure to fill out the form completely and date and sign it and have the dog owner date and sign it
- Attach an invoice of the medical services provided
- Send all materials requested on 'Reimbursement checklist' based on specific patient classification
- All materials should be emailed to [hillsinbox@hillspet.com](mailto:hillsinbox@hillspet.com), or mailed to Veterinary Consultation Service, Hill's Pet Nutrition, 400 SW 8th Avenue Topeka KS 66603
- Please contact Hill's Veterinary Consultation Service about reimbursement for periodic, continued testing if your patient has elevated vitamin D.

The reimbursement request will be reviewed by Hill's and reimbursement will be

provided at Hill's sole discretion. Your clinic will receive a reimbursement per the details provided in the 'Patient reimbursement request form' (up to a maximum of \$800 per patient) as soon as possible after receipt of the forms *if you are a Hill's customer*. Expected processing time is approximately 12 weeks, but will vary based on the number of requests. Requests for reimbursement will be reviewed in the order in which they are received. Please be advised, if you are not a Hill's customer, processing may take longer.

This reimbursement is made available to help offset the costs of the physical examination and tests that would otherwise be incurred by your client.

For more information, please contact the Hill's Veterinary Consultation Service at 1-800-548-8387 or email [vet\\_consult@hillspet.com](mailto:vet_consult@hillspet.com), or submit a case for VCS input at [www.hillsvet.com/VCS](http://www.hillsvet.com/VCS).

In most cases, complete recovery is expected after discontinuation of feeding.

Both Hill's and the FDA encourage customers to contact consumers who have purchased recalled products, if they have the means to do so.



## Hill's Expanded Voluntary Recall Diagnostic Reimbursement Request Checklist

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Dear Colleague,

Hill's recognizes that pet parents may have concerns about the health of their pets. All pets should be assessed on a case-by-case basis to evaluate their individual health, to gain an understanding of how much voluntarily recalled product they may have consumed and over what period of time, and to assess any health risks they may face.

To support veterinarians in their relationships with their clients and their pets and as an expression of our empathy for pet parents, Hill's will evaluate on a case by case basis, requests for reimbursement of veterinary fees including specific diagnostic tests and treatment for dogs who have eaten the voluntarily recalled diets and where the veterinarian recommends diagnostic tests and treatment for hypervitaminosis D.

We created the below checklist to help facilitate your reimbursement request for diagnostic testing related to the Hill's expanded voluntary recall. Please remember:

- Dogs must have eaten one of the voluntarily recalled Hill's canned dog food products. See [www.hillspet.ca/productlist](http://www.hillspet.ca/productlist)
- Dog(s) must either show or have shown signs of hypervitaminosis D, such as vomiting, loss of appetite, increased thirst, increased urination, excessive drooling and weight loss.
- Your professional judgment should confirm the need to perform appropriate screening analysis.

Documents to submit:

**Incomplete submissions will require follow up and delay the reimbursement process.**

1. Step 1 - For pets receiving the screening protocol when laboratory results come back normal use the following checklist.

<b>Screening Documents</b>	<b>✓</b>
Completed Pet Information Form	
Purchase History Form	
Pet Food Proof of Purchase	
Results of serum chemistries & urinalysis	
Invoice(s) for the office visit, serum chemistries, urinalysis	

2. Step 2 - For pets with hypercalcemia that required vitamin D panel assessment

<b>Screening &amp; Treatment Documents</b>	<b>✓</b>
Completed Pet Information Form	
Purchase History Form	
Pet Food Proof of Purchase	
Results of serum chemistries, urinalysis and vitamin D panel	
Complete medical records for the current situation	

Please refer to the **Reimbursement instructions document** for specific information regarding the requests for reimbursement for the Hill's expanded voluntary recall.