

TREATING DOG DIARRHEA

DON'T RUN FROM DIARRHEA



Diarrhea is a common problem in dogs, often because they'll put almost anything in their mouth, but it can also be caused by more serious health problems. **Some of these issues require close attention, especially if the diarrhea is severe** or occurs frequently. **Communicate with your FC and do not be afraid to send photos** so we can see what's going on (our text messages can get pretty interesting).



WHAT TO WATCH FOR

Loose stools are, of course, the main indicator of diarrhea. **Diarrhea may also be accompanied by vomiting, loss of appetite, weight loss, abdominal pain, lethargy** and other symptoms of disease.

PRIMARY CAUSES OF DIARRHEA IN DOGS

- **Acute diarrhea (appears suddenly)** in an otherwise healthy dog is often due to dietary indiscretion (scavenging or eating food outside their diet like food scraps); stress; a sudden change in diet (switching their food without a transition period); or viral, bacterial or parasitic infections. **We see this often as fosters, our dogs go through a lot of change, not only in their environment, but their diets as well.** This is **common in foster dogs** and will usually subside as your foster gets used to a new diet and their surroundings.
- **Chronic diarrhea can be caused by** dietary allergies or intolerances, stress, parasites (e.g. Giardia, hookworms, roundworms, whipworms), bacterial infections, pancreatic disease, inflammatory bowel disease, irritable bowel syndrome, some cancers, and diseases outside of the gastrointestinal tract (e.g., liver failure or heart disease).

AT-HOME TREATMENT FOR ACUTE DIARRHEA

If your foster dog is an otherwise healthy adult, then it's reasonable to try some at-home treatments. For healthy adult dogs who have diarrhea with no other symptoms:



1. Make sure your foster dog has access to plenty of clean water to avoid dehydration. Encourage your dog to drink. If needed, offer dilute, low-sodium chicken or beef broth or Pedialyte in addition to the water.
2. Give your foster dog a small meal of boiled, white-meat chicken (no bones or skin) and white rice—you can also use sweet potato or instead of rice pumpkin (plain canned pumpkin, not pumpkin pie filling). You can give this diet to your foster dog until their stool consistency returns to normal. (Pumpkin and sweet potato can also be added to your dog's regular diet to increase their fiber intake.)
3. If diarrhea continues for more than 48 hours or if your foster dog's condition worsens at any time, call your FC immediately.

AT-HOME TREATMENT FOR DIARRHEA WITH VOMITING

For dogs with diarrhea who have vomited only once or twice:

1. Remove **all food for 8-12 hours** and stop giving meds (often, antibiotics or pain killers can be the culprit).
2. To **avoid dehydration**, offer your foster dog small amounts of water frequently throughout the day. If needed, also offer some dilute, low-sodium chicken or beef broth or Pedialyte in addition to water. **Ice chips or cubes work too.**
3. When your foster dog has not vomited for at least 8-12 hours, **offer a small amount of boiled, white- meat chicken** (no bones, skin or spices) and white rice.
4. Wait 2 hours. If your foster dog has not vomited during this time, **you can offer another small meal of cooked chicken and rice.**
5. Continue this **bland diet for 1-3 days**, gradually increasing the amount of food offered at each meal and lengthening the time between meals until the stool consistency returns to normal. You will need to do **a gradual transition back to your dog's typical diet** in order to avoid another gastrointestinal upset.
6. If the diarrhea continues for more than 48 hours or your foster dog's condition worsens at any time, **call your FC immediately.**



STEPS FOR SUCCESS

DIAGNOSING DIARRHEA



If your foster dog suffers from frequent liquid bowel movements, or the **current attack is severe and/or associated with vomiting, lethargy, abdominal pain or weight loss, contact your FC immediately**, as your foster dog will likely need IV fluids and a stay with the vet to get them back on track.



Diagnosing the cause of dog diarrhea can **sometimes be as easy as running a simple fecal exam**. But sometimes, **it can be challenging and require different procedures** such as blood work, abdominal X-rays or ultrasound, endoscopy, or exploratory surgery.

HOW TO PREVENT DIARRHEA IN DOGS



Do not suddenly change your foster dog's diet – often times this is unavoidable with foster dogs, but if you are sent home with the dog's regular diet and are transitioning to a diet that you feed your own pets, please do this slowly.



Do not let your foster dog play with small objects that could be swallowed (such as children's toys).



Do not give your foster dog bones as toys (firm, rubber chew toys are a better choice).



Do not allow your foster dog to scavenge.



Do not feed your foster dog table scraps.



Learn how to properly use a bland diet to treat a dog with diarrhea.





What is Your Dog's Poop Telling You?

The Four Cs of Poop

Do you know what the ideal dog poop looks like? Next time you're picking up after your pup, use the four Cs (color, consistency, coating and contents) to help check on your dog's health. Below, learn more about what color and consistency your dog's poop should be.



Color



Brown
A happy, healthy dog body produces chocolate brown stool.



Green
Green color in your dog's stool could mean your pet is eating a lot of grass due to GI upset.



Black
Tarry black or maroon stools can be caused by bleeding in the stomach or small intestines.



Red Streaks
Bright red streaks may indicate bleeding low in the GI tract.



Yellow
Yellow color in your dog's stool can indicate problems with the liver, gallbladder, or pancreas.



White Spots
White spots in your dog's stool may mean your pet has worms.

Stool Scale

Vets commonly use a scale from one to seven to represent the the shape and consistency that dog stool can have. One being very hard pellets and seven being a formless puddle.



Ideal Stool: Ironically a number 2 on the dog stool scale is the ideal shape and consistency for a healthy dog stool.

Cause for Alarm: Formless stool lasting more than a day should warrant a trip to the vet.



Infographics Source:

<http://www.petmd.com/dog/care/how-should-my-dogs-poop-look>