

Haemorrhagic gastroenteritis (HGE) in dogs

Overview

Haemorrhagic gastroenteritis (HGE) is a condition that causes severe illness, vomiting and bloody diarrhoea. Specialists suspect it's caused by a nasty bacteria that attacks the lining of the guts.

Symptoms of HGE usually last 2-4 days. Most dogs make a good recovery if they get veterinary treatment quickly.

If your dog is showing any signs of HGE you should contact your vet immediately.

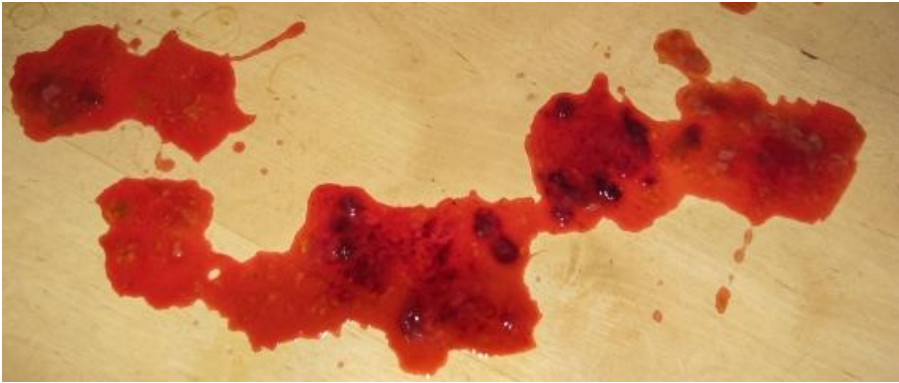
Symptoms of HGE

Common symptoms of HGE include:

- **Large amounts of diarrhoea** (containing blood and sometimes gut lining which looks like strawberry jam)
- **Vomiting** - may contain blood
- **Painful abdomen (tummy)** – signs include yelping when picked up, growling when you touch their tummy, standing in a “prayer position” with their front legs on the floor and hind legs stood up
- **Pale gums**
- **Low energy (lethargy)**
- **Reduced appetite**

Dogs with HGE often become poorly very quickly. They can look perfectly normal one day and extremely unwell the next.

Fortunately, most dogs with HGE will make a full recovery a few days after treatment from a vet. Symptoms of HGE are very similar to symptoms of parvovirus.



BLOOD AND GUT LINING IN DIARRHOEA

When to contact your vet

Contact your vet if your dog is showing any of the signs above. Left without treatment, dogs with HGE are likely to become dehydrated which can lead to severe illness and sometimes even death.

If HGE is treated quickly it is likely your dog will make a full recovery within a few days. If your dog isn't treated quickly, HGE can become very serious and in some cases can cause death.

You know your dog best. If they don't have the symptoms listed above but you are still concerned then contact your vet.

Causes

No one is completely sure what causes HGE yet, but scientists think it is likely to be a nasty bacteria that attacks and damages the lining of the guts.

HGE is more common in small breed dogs especially:

- Yorkshire Terriers
- Miniature Schnauzers'
- Maltese



Treatment for HGE

If your vet thinks your dog has HGE it's likely they will admit them into the veterinary hospital for treatment. They may need to stay in for several days.

Treatment for HGE usually includes:

- A drip to give lifesaving fluids
- Anti-sickness medication
- Small bland meals frequently throughout the day
- Antibiotics - although they aren't always needed
- X-rays and / or blood tests for more information
- Most dogs with HGE are put into an isolation kennel away from other dogs to help stop the spread of HGE to other vulnerable dogs in the hospital

Will my dog get better?

Fortunately, most dogs treated for HGE make a full recovery within a few days and usually show a big improvement within 24 hours of receiving veterinary treatment.

If your dog isn't treated quickly, HGE can become a very serious condition and in some cases can cause death.

Cost

Treatment for HGE can cost hundreds of pounds. Think about insuring your dog as soon as you get them, before any signs of illness start. This means you will have all the support you need if they become poorly.

It's also very important to speak openly to your vet about your finances, the cost of treatment, as well as what you think is right for your dog. There are often several treatment options so if one doesn't work for you and your pet then your vet may be able to offer another.

Published: July 2018