

Vomiting in dogs

Overview

- There are lots of different problems that can make a dog feel sick or vomit.
- Most mild cases of vomiting improve within 24 hours, but continuous vomiting can be a sign of something more serious.
- Contact your vet for advice if your dog has vomited.
- **Contact your vet immediately if your dog is trying to vomit and not bringing anything up, or if they have a bloated tummy. Both can be signs of a twisted stomach (GDV), which can be life threatening.**



How to tell if your dog is feeling sick

If your dog is feeling sick, they may show the following signs:

- Eating less or off their food completely

- Lip licking
- Repeated swallowing
- Dribbling more saliva than usual
- Restlessness

Causes of vomiting

There are very many conditions that can cause vomiting, including:

- A gut blockage
- Eating something poisonous or irritating.
- Twisted stomach (GDV)
- Pancreatitis
- Haemorrhagic gastroenteritis (HGE)
- Infected womb (pyometra)
- Worms
- Vestibular disease
- Gastritis
- Medication reaction/side effect
- Travel sickness
- Liver disease
- Kidney disease
- Addison's disease
- Food allergies
- Diabetes
- Gut ulcers (this can sometimes be due to anti-inflammatory medication)
- Infections e.g. parvovirus

When to contact your vet

If your dog has vomited once but seems well otherwise, you may decide to watch them at home before visiting your vet. Be sure to contact your vet if they deteriorate, vomit again or if you are concerned.

Contact your vet immediately if your dog has any of the following symptoms:

- Trying to vomit but not bringing anything up
- A bloated tummy
- Vomiting for more than 24 hours
- Vomiting constantly with no gaps in-between
- Vomiting when very young or very old
- Vomiting and has other illnesses
- A painful tummy
- Blood or black dots (look like coffee granules) in their vomit.
- Showing signs of dehydration (for example sticky gums or sunken eyes)
- Low energy (lethargy): quiet, sleeping more than normal
- Disorientation or collapse

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

Caring for a dog who has vomited

Always contact your vet if your dog seems unwell or you're worried. However, if your dog has only vomited once and seems otherwise well, you may decide to wait and see if they vomit again before taking them to the vets. Here are a few things you can try at home during that time.

Withhold food

A short period without food (12 - 24 hours) can help. Make sure they are still drinking water.

Small, regular bland meals

Give your dog small, regular, bland meals throughout the day.

Bland diets are available in tins (contact your vet for more information), or alternatively you can give them plain boiled rice and chicken breast or white fish. Don't give your dog anything rich or fatty – this could make their vomiting worse!

Plenty of water

To prevent dehydration your dog may need to drink more to replace the water they're losing in their vomit. Provide plenty of fresh water and make sure your dog is drinking little and often throughout the day. Speak to your vet if your dog won't drink or is drinking much less or more than usual.

Rest

Let your dog rest and recover. They may not want to go out and about, so avoid anything too energetic for a couple of days.

Gradually reintroduce their normal food

Once your dog has stopped vomiting you can start to reintroduce their normal diet.

Published: July 2018