

### Overview

Diarrhea is a common problem characterized by abnormal loose, watery or watery-mucoid stools. Occasionally the fecal material is also bloody. Diarrhea can be described as acute, sudden onset and short duration (three weeks or less), or chronic (longer duration).

There are multiple causes of diarrhea. It can be caused by parasites, dietary indiscretion, changing foods, foreign body ingestion, tumors, and inflammatory gastrointestinal diseases and/or may occur as a side effect from some medications.

Diarrhea results from excessive water content in the feces and is an important sign of intestinal disease. Diarrhea can affect your pet by causing extreme fluid loss, which leads to dehydration, electrolyte disturbances, and/or acid-base imbalances.

### Diagnosis and Treatment Notes:

- The cause of the diarrhea may be diagnosed with a thorough history, physical examination, fecal examination and bloodwork. Abdominal x-rays and abdominal ultrasound may be recommended. In some cases, no definitive diagnosis is achieved.
- Treatment depends on the severity of the disease, your individual pet, and your veterinarian. Pets with diarrhea are initially treated by resting the intestinal tract by withholding food for a period of time. They are then fed a bland easily digestible diet. Some will benefit from fluids, antibiotics and antidiarrheals. Discuss treatment details when your pet is diagnosed with this condition.

### What to Watch for\*:

- Passage of loose, watery stools
- Color change to feces
- Blood in the feces
- Poor appetite
- Lethargy
- Vomiting
- Abdominal pain
- Weakness

*\*Please notify us if you notice any of the above signs or if you have any questions!*