



Recognizing Illness and Discomfort in Our Canine Companions

Feeling Under the Weather

- Vomiting – body’s way of expelling “foreign” material
 - First time – note amount, contents – wouldn’t be too worried yet, it could be one time thing
 - Second time within a few hours – pull food and water and don’t give anything to eat
 - Keep a close eye on him/her
 - More than 3 times – make an appointment to see your vet or go to the ER vet
 - Your vet will ask you:
 - possible toxin ingestion, what food/treats has he/she gotten, does he/she eat socks, toys, trash
 - how many times does he/she vomit per day and for how many days
 - consistency, contents, if there is blood
 - Exceptions – if you see any of these things go to the vet soon:
 - Blood
 - Toxins – rat bait (green granules), chocolate look/ smell, grapes
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DIORpTFLh_8
 - Bloat – signs include multiple retching episodes within a short time frame, salivation, and a distended abdomen – This is an EMERGENCY
- Not Eating – animals may not want to eat when they feel sick, painful, or nervous
 - One day – keep close eye on him/her
 - Two days – offer a delicious treat (deli meat, cheese, peanut butter, canned food, etc)
 - If still refusing food – go to your vet
 - Exception – if these signs also seen with lack of appetite, see your vet:
 - Pale gums
 - Vomiting/ diarrhea
 - Not moving around or wanting to get up
 - Uninterested in their favorite treats, toys, or past-times
 - Not drinking water – animals can go a few days without food, but water is critical
- Lethargic – acting more tired or depressed than usual
 - Watch for a few hours and see if they ‘snap’ out of it
 - Things to consider and look for to determine if a vet trip is needed:
 - How long has he/she been lethargic?
 - Do you see wounds?
 - Can they walk? Do they seem painful anywhere?
 - Are they disinterested in some of their favorite things?
 - Is he/she vomiting or having diarrhea too? Eating? Drinking?
 - Pale gums? Abnormal respirations?





Missouri German Shepherd Rescue (MoGS)
Doggie Health & Wellness Team
Wellness Wednesday Series on Canine Health

- Diarrhea
 - If your pet has had one or two loose bowel movements try feeding bland food such as boiled chicken/beef, plain rice, pumpkin, or plain yogurt
 - If diarrhea persists, see your vet
 - If pet starts to vomit, pull food and water and go to the vet
 - Diarrhea causes rapid dehydration – please go to the vet ASAP if:
 - It persists for more than 24 hours
 - It's an unvaccinated puppy (worried about parvo)
 - Blood present
 - Black or tarry appearance (sign of possible GI ulcers)
- When you should see a vet ASAP no matter what
 - Fever (anything over 102° can be worrisome; if pet stressed it can be around 103°)
 - Pale or yellowing gums
 - Racing heart rate when resting
 - Difficulty breathing
 - Check out this great video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gvrI3XP1hHI>

Recognizing Pain

- Abnormal posture – hunched, tail tucked, head held low
 - Full or impacted anal glands won't always mean butt scooting; it can also present as sitting a lot, hunched posture, abnormal walking gait
 - Back pain is common in older patients and short legged breeds
 - Sign of arthritis too
- Poor coat quality from lack of grooming or over-grooming such as licking a sore spot
- Limping
 - Injury to a limb – this could be anything from a mild sprain to bone or ligament injury
 - Larger breeds and overweight dogs are prone to cranial cruciate ligament tears (similar to people tearing an ACL) and is common after exercise/ playtime
- Dragging feet or legs – This is an EMERGENCY
 - Back injury
 - Vascular compromise
 - Dislocated joints
- Not wanting to get up and move around
 - Can be pain, illness, or a mixture of the two
- Another good video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wXlvH3OJahg>

