

Dog Constipation

The causes and treatments of constipation in dogs.

CAUSES OF CONSTIPATION

Trauma: Recent pelvic fracture causing painful defecation, improperly healed pelvic fracture causing narrowing of pelvic inlet (the part of the pelvis through which the colon passes), injury to pelvic nerves or spinal cord, or injury to the colon, causing narrowing.

Non-infectious/Acquired disease: Prostate enlargement, causing narrowing of the pelvic inlet.

Tumors: In the colon, rectum, or prostate.

Endocrine disorders: Hypothyroidism.

Drug reactions: Diuretics, antihistamines, calcium channel-blocking agents, tricyclic antidepressants, and others.

Miscellaneous disorders: Dysautonomia (abnormal function of the autonomic nervous system) or lymph node enlargement causing narrowing of pelvic inlet.

Metabolic disorder: Hypokalemia (decreased blood potassium) or hypercalcemia (elevated blood calcium).

Other: Hard, dry stool due to ingestion of cat litter, hair, bones, etc. Inadequate water intake or reluctance to defecate due to pain.

What to do: For mild constipation with no other signs of illness, the following measures may provide relief: Regulate diet. Make sure your dog isn't eating bones, cat litter, etc. Ensure adequate water intake. Provide fresh water at all times and moisten dry food. Take your dog for a 15-minute walk after meals (mild exercise promotes regularity).

With your veterinarian's approval, give your dog laxative paste (available at pet supply stores or from your veterinarian). If these measures don't relieve the constipation, call your veterinarian during regular office hours to make an appointment. If your dog's constipation is accompanied by signs of illness (vomiting, lethargy, collapse, etc.), contact your veterinarian or emergency clinic immediately.

Disclaimer: DogChannel.com's Dog Medical Conditions are intended for educational purposes only. They are not meant to replace the expertise and experience of a professional veterinarian. Do not use the information presented here to make decisions about your dog's ailment. If you notice changes in your dog's health or behavior, please take your pet to the nearest veterinarian or an emergency pet clinic as soon as possible.

Have a health question about your dog? Ask our vet expert or ask other dog owners on our forums.