

Dog Goes Potty After Walks

Why does my dog go potty again soon after a walk?

By September Morn

Q: We just acquired a 6-year-old Bichon Frise from a good home. She is a sweetheart but quite timid and is having trouble adjusting to our family. She follows me everywhere but is slow to warm up to the others.

But the real problem is that she poops four times a day. They all appear to be healthy poops. Is this normal and healthy? Also some of these poops are in the house, but she was fully housetrained in her former home. The accidents are not when she is left alone or has not been walked. I will walk her, and 10 minutes later, she will poop in the house.

She has been tested negative for worms.

Robin
via DOG FANCY e-mail

A: You didn't say she pooped when you walk her outside, only that she poops soon after she's back in the house again. This could be for several reasons. One is that timid or very sensitive dogs sometimes try not to poop when someone is watching, just in case the person might not approve. Also, going for a walk is more exciting than when she gets back to the house, and some dogs can't poop when excited and taking in all the smells, sounds, and sights on a walk.

The solution to both these possible reasons is to take your Bichon Frise for a brisk walk first. Then when you get home, stand in the yard with her in an area where it's OK for her to go potty, until she is relaxed from the walk and realizes she needs to poop. Stand with your side to her and your eyes averted so she doesn't feel like you're staring at her. If she can't go within five minutes in the yard, take her back inside but keep her leashed and with you. After a few minutes, take her back outside, straight to her potty area, and give her another five minutes or so to do any business she might need to do. Praise her quietly and calmly if she poops or even sniffs at a spot she's used previously. Keep her in-yard potty area picked up daily so it doesn't get so dirty that she won't want to go back to the spot. Leave just one little bit of "reminder poop" in her potty area, so she'll know it's still the appropriate place.

As for pooping four times a day, that's more than some dogs go. But the number of times that dogs poop depends on the number of times they eat per day. If your dog's food is always available for her to snack on whenever she wants to, she'll probably poop more often than if you serve her meals twice daily at regularly scheduled times.

Another reason for excess pooping is when a dog eats more food than she needs, or if the food itself isn't being properly digested. Improper digestion can occur with some bargain-priced dog foods whose ingredients aren't of high quality. It can also happen with good-quality foods if the individual dog's digestive system can't handle certain ingredients contained in that food. You might try a different brand for a while and see if it makes any difference in your dog's poop output.