

## Housetrained Shih Tzu Has Accidents

**A pottytrained dog who begins having accidents could have a urinary infection.**

*By September Morn*

Q. I have a three-year-old Shih Tzu named Pucci. He was housetrained very early on and never went in the house. Recently, he has started urinating in the house. I took him to the vet because my first thought was he has a urinary tract infection. The vet said he did have a minor infection and treated it, however he is still urinating in the house. So I had to start crating him during the day. I feel terrible doing this as I know something is bothering him. How can I get back to where we were two months ago? Do I have to re-train him all over again?

A. That was wise of you to suspect health problems and take Pucci to the veterinarian when he started having accidents in the house after being reliably pottytrained. Sometimes the medications for urinary tract infections aren't able to kill off all the bacteria, and the infection can come back again.

It's important to have a urine sample checked after the prescribed antibiotics are used up. Then, if any bacteria have survived the first treatment, the dog can be given another prescription (of either the same or different meds).

Since Pucci is still having accidents, it would be a good idea to have his urine re-tested. This test will probably include a urine culture, a special test done in a laboratory, to determine which antibiotics are best for eliminating that particular type of bacteria.

As for crating more than four hours at a stretch during the day, that may not be the best type of management for him. When a dog holds his urine too long, that can actually cause or worsen a urinary tract problem. A folding wire "exercise pen" can be a better management option than a crate for Pucci's long hours of daytime confinement. The pen is roomier than a crate and allows enough space for a bed and a bowl of water at one end and a potty area (newspapers, pee pads, or a litterbox) at the other end. This set up would allow Pucci to empty his bladder when he needs to, but still keep him from peeing in other areas around the house.