

Parasites: No. 1 Cause of Puppy Diarrhea

Deworming, followed by a fast then a bland diet should clear up puppy's diarrhea.

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Q. My 16-week-old Havanese-Poodle mix puppy has loose stool. She's been wormed and is current on all her shots. I've tried changing dog food and cutting out treats.

Is there anything we can give her that would help without putting her through a lot of tests?

A. Loose stools in puppies are certainly a common condition. The No. 1 cause of diarrhea in young dogs is parasites, so another deworming would be a good place to start. Another common cause of diarrhea is diet change, so it's best to stick with one high quality dog food. With a few exceptions, most of the premium brands are all good, and not significantly different.

Give your puppy's intestines a chance to heal up with a one-day fast of water only. Then introduce some easily digestible people food such as plain yogurt, plain low fat cottage cheese, boiled white rice and boiled chicken, feeding small amounts three to four times a day. After several days of this bland diet, gradually mix it with your puppy's regular diet.

Most of the time, digestion will normalize. If not, try the routine again before switching diets.

If the problem is still not resolved, I suggest that you submit a stool sample to your veterinarian for analysis. Certain parasites such as giardia and coccidian require specific medication.