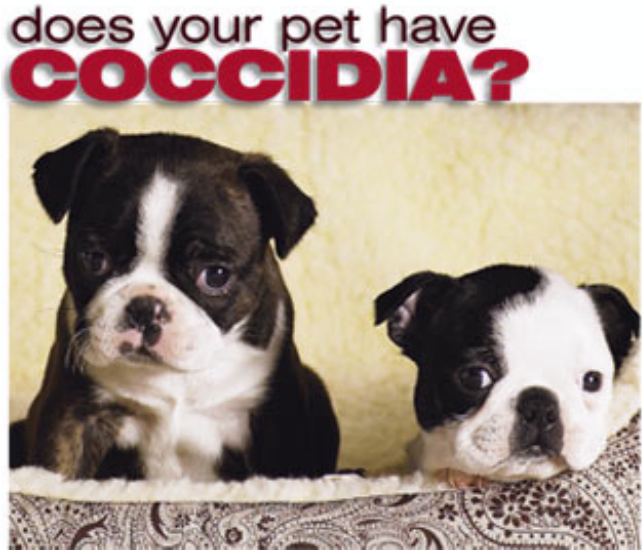
Coccidia: Symptoms and Treatment

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff



COCCIDIA are small protozoans (one-celled organisms) that multiply in the intestinal tracts of dogs and cats. They are most common in puppies and kittens less than six months of age or adult animals that are stressed or have a suppressed immune system.

Young animals are frequently exposed to their mother's feces. If the mother is shedding the infective organisms in her feces, then the young animals will likely ingest them and coccidia will develop within their intestines. Most young animals who are ill from coccidia are two weeks of age and older. As a young animal ages, he tends to develop a natural immunity to the effects of coccidia.

The primary sign of an animal suffering from coccidiosis is diarrhea. The diarrhea may be mild to severe depending on the level of infection. Blood and mucous may be present. Severely affected animals may also vomit, lose their appetite, become dehydrated, or worse.

Fortunately, coccidiosis is treatable with prescription drugs such as Albon® and trimethoprim/sulfa that can be found in our online pharmacy. Because these drugs do not kill the organisms, but rather inhibit their reproduction capabilities, elimination of coccidia from the intestine takes time. By stopping the ability of the protozoa to reproduce, time is allowed for the animal's own immunity to develop and remove the organisms. To give your pet's digestive tract a boost while being treated, try Acidophilus+ or Bene-Bac Pet Gel.

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