Diarrhea in Dogs: How to Maintain Digestive Balance

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Diarrhea is a common problem among pets. It can result from a serious disease such as a parvovirus infection, or be simply caused by curious dogs consuming things that are not healthy for their digestive systems. After any bout of diarrhea, it is common for the bacteria in the intestinal tract to become out of balance.

Many species of bacteria live in the intestinal tract. Some can be harmful, but most are beneficial. These bacteria are called the normal "intestinal flora," and are actually essential for good health. They aid digestion by breaking down food into its basic components for easier absorption and utilization by the body, and also manufacture some vitamins. In addition, their presence decreases the likelihood that disease-causing bacteria gain a foothold.

When a dog develops diarrhea, beneficial bacteria can be flushed from his system. If he is being treated with antibiotics, the antibiotics can not only kill the disease-causing bacteria, they can kill the beneficial bacteria as well. Without proper levels of the beneficial bacteria in the intestinal system, your pet won't get the same benefits or optimal nutrients from his food.

To maintain the proper bacterial balance, consider supplementing with digestive aids containing beneficial bacteria. They come in a variety of forms - paste, powder, capsules, tablets, liquid, and soft chews. We especially like Bene-Bac Gel for younger animals. It has an excellent track record and it's easy to give to juveniles.

If your pet is currently having diarrhea, you may consider a product that contains kaolin and pectin. Proviable Paste contains kaolin and pectin and can be used with Proviable capsules, which contain "good" microbials.

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If gas is the problem, consider your dog's food. Studies in dogs have shown that when rice is a carbohydrate source there is less intestinal gas formation than with foods containing wheat or corn. If flatulence is a problem, avoid soy protein and diets high in crude fiber (over 5%). Our Signature Series of dry dog foods are made with rice as the first carbohydrate source, contain no soy protein, and have fiber levels less than 5%. An exception is Adult Chicken and Brown Rice Lite Diet, designed specifically to have higher fiber. You may also choose to add a digestive aid such as Vetri-Probiotic to fortify/re-establish beneficial bacterial populations to your pet's diet.

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