



**Associated Veterinary Specialists, PC, LTD**  
12462G Natural Bridge Road  
Bridgeton, Missouri 63044  
314-739-1510  
Emergency 314-739-3330

## Gastroenteritis

**Definition:** inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract, usually affected the stomach and/or intestines. This can be caused by a bacterial, or viral infection, parasitic infection or a reaction to a certain food or medication.

Gastroenteritis could be a sign of another underlying condition

Clinical signs that indicate your pet may be experiencing gastroenteritis include, but are not limited to the following:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea, may include blood
- Decreased appetite
- Lethargy
- Abdominal pain

Dehydration can occur quickly if vomiting and diarrhea are persistent and occur for more than 24 hours. If this occurs, please seek medical attention for your pet immediately.

When bringing your pet to the veterinary hospital, a few diagnostic tests that our doctors may recommend to rule out gastroenteritis include, but are not limited to the following:

- Blood tests including a complete blood count (CBC) and chemistry panel to evaluate for dehydration, electrolyte abnormalities, liver and kidney function and infection.
- Imaging including x-rays or ultrasound to evaluate for tumors, foreign material and overall organ appearance.
- Urinalysis to evaluate for any underlying disease or urinary tract infection

Treatment of gastroenteritis can vary from case to case. Common treatment include:

- Anti-nausea and/or anti-diarrheal medications that may be administered in the hospital or sent home
- Fluid administration to correct for any dehydration. These can be given through an IV or under the skin
- Bland diets are recommended while your pet is sick and recovering from their illness. These can be given as a prescription diet or a homemade diet may be



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recommended. Please see the client handout, “Bland Diets” for more information.

Most cases of gastroenteritis improve drastically once the pet is rehydrated. If your pet is treated on an outpatient basis and clinical signs do not improve or resolve after 24 hours, please seek further medical care and/or diagnostics.

If your pet has multiple episodes of gastroenteritis, further diagnostics may be indicated to identify an underlying disease condition.

Kimberly Loyd, DVM, DACVIM

Reference: American Veterinary Medical Association