



Pure Paws Veterinary Care of Hell's Kitchen

COMMON MEDICAL ISSUES ENCOUNTERED IN FOSTER

What to Expect and How to Help Your Foster Animal

KENNEL COUGH/ RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS



- This is a common issue due to transport.
- Cough sounds like a goose honk, often with a gag at the end.
- Concerns requiring veterinary attention include poor appetite, labored breathing, yellow/green nasal discharge, and lethargy. *But, if you're ever in doubt, call your vet!*
- These infections are usually viral but are often treated with antibiotics.
- Even with appropriate treatment, these infections can progress to pneumonia in some cases.

GI UPSET

- Vomiting and diarrhea are very common in foster pets. In general, one episode is not alarming.
- It's common for dogs to eat foreign objects, which can be dangerous. Let the foster team know if you think your foster animal has ingested a foreign object and watch for signs like loss of appetite, vomiting, diarrhea, and strained stools.
- At-home treatment for vomiting: Fast the animal for 6-12 hours, then offer a small amount of water. If the dog is able to keep the water down, offer a small amount of bland food.
- Bland foods include chicken and rice (boiled), potatoes, pasta, oatmeal, and scrambled eggs. Avoid fatty foods.
- Lack of poop is not usually concerning. Many dogs will have to adjust to pooping on pavement, but these animals can go several days without pooping without getting sick. If you notice straining to poop, that's more concerning.



DIARRHEA & PARASITES

- Parasites are extremely common, but you can't always see them with the naked eye.
- Tapeworms originate from fleas and can often be seen with the naked eye. If you see rice kernel-like worms in the feces, or sesame seed-like things stuck to the fur around the anus, these are usually tapeworms. They can cause itchiness, but usually don't cause diarrhea. Treatment consists of 1) flea prevention and, 2) Drontal Plus or another praziquantel containing dewormer.
- Roundworms can occasionally be seen in the feces, look like spaghetti, and often cause diarrhea.
- Giardia is another common cause of diarrhea. It's contagious and can affect immune-compromised people, so always wash your hands after handling pet waste.
- Mild diarrhea that lasts for less than 48 hours is not a concern. However, watery, bloody diarrhea requires treatment. We recommend these dogs see a veterinarian to make sure they are not dehydrated, start on medication, and ideally have a fecal test to rule out parasites.



THANK YOU FOR BEING AN ANIMAL WELFARE ADVOCATE!

ALL OF THE PUPS AT HEARTS & BONES

SKIN ISSUES

- Ringworm is a fungal infection, and not an actual worm. It is not common, but it is concerning because it's contagious to people. Signs of infection are similar in people and pets, including round and scaly lesions, itchiness, and hair loss. If your foster animal shows signs of ringworm infection, and you experience similar symptoms, there's a chance you may have ringworm and should see your primary care doctor.
- Fleas are black and run on the skin. Fleas generally avoid the head, and prefer the back and groin areas. They are itchy! The dogs are pre-treated before travel, but sometimes you might find a leftover survivor or two. We recommend bathing your foster animal in blue Dawn dish soap if you suspect there might be remaining fleas, as this will smother the fleas if left on for 5 minutes.
- Mange (demodex) often appears as non-itchy hair loss, and hair loss is usually patchy. This is not contagious to other dogs or people.
- Mange (scabies) is extremely itchy. So much so that it can interfere with sleep! This is contagious to other dogs and people.
- Allergic itching can also happen, and is one of the most common issues seen in rescue dogs who have been on low-quality diets. You can give Benadryl, 1 mg/lb, and see if that improves the itching. If you notice no improvement, check with the foster team.
- Dry skin can be remedied with fish oil. 1000 mg/day is generally a safe dose for most sized pets. You can bathe pets with moisturizing shampoo as well, but it must be a dog-specific shampoo.



URINARY ISSUES

- Blood in the urine is not common and never normal. This could be a result of a urinary tract infection, stress, or bladder stones.
- Straining to urinate or urinating frequently in small volumes should warrant a visit to the vet, and treatment will likely consist of antibiotics.
- Accidents in the house are often behavioral, but could also indicate infection, especially if the volume of the urine is small or there is an odor.



Hearts & Bones trusts Dr. Stephanie Liff, DVM & Owner of Pure Paws Veterinary Care, to provide top-quality, gentle, and dependable veterinary medical care for its foster animals.

If you would like your foster animal to be seen by Dr. Stephanie Liff at either Pure Paws location, we request that you please first reach out to the foster team at Hearts & Bones so we can help facilitate the process and stay in the loop.

Once you get approval from the foster team at Hearts & Bones, feel free to schedule a visit at the Pure Paws location most convenient to you!

**Pure Paws is always here to help.
Open 7 days a week!**

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