

Gastroenteritis

WHAT IS GASTROENTERITIS?

Gastroenteritis refers to inflammation of the lining of the gastrointestinal tract (the stomach and intestines). It can have a number of causes including infection with bacteria, viruses or parasites, ingestion of new/different foods, toxicities or even certain medications. Diseases of other organs such as the pancreas and liver can also cause inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract.

The signs of gastroenteritis often seen include:

- Vomiting.
- Diarrhoea (usually large volumes).
- Painful abdomen.
- Reduced appetite.
- Lethargy.
- Possible fever.

Regardless of the cause, gastroenteritis can result in dehydration and electrolyte imbalances if the vomiting or diarrhoea persists. Some animals will require IV fluid therapy to rehydrate them, protect them during ongoing fluid losses, and correct any electrolyte imbalances.

HOW DO WE DIAGNOSE GASTROENTERITIS?

After obtaining a thorough medical and behavioural history, we will perform a physical examination, recording vital signs (heart rate, respiratory rate and temperature) and assessing your pet for evidence of dehydration, abdominal pain, bloating, and any other abnormalities.

Depending on the findings of the medical history and examination, we may recommend further tests such as:

- Collecting **blood +/- urine** to assess hydration status and electrolyte balance and/or for signs of infection and organ dysfunction.
- Abdominal **radiographs** or **ultrasound** to assess the size and shape of organs within the abdomen and to rule out bowel obstruction and other life-threatening abdominal disorders.
- Faecal testing** (faecal float, PCR, or culture) to assess for viral, bacterial and/or parasitic infections.

HOW DO WE TREAT GASTROENTERITIS?

The initial veterinary assessment and supportive test results will help determine if your pet needs to be cared for in hospital, or can be managed as an outpatient. If an underlying cause for the vomiting and diarrhoea is found then specific treatment for that cause will be initiated.

At home treatment is targeted towards maintaining hydration and electrolyte balance and minimising discomfort whilst your pet recovers and may include:

- Small frequent feedings of a highly digestible, low fat diet e.g. Royal Canin Gastrointestinal diet.
- Anti-nausea medications.
- Gastrointestinal protectants.
- Probiotics.
- Oral hydration therapy.
- Rest to allow recovery.

If your pet has to be hospitalised they will likely receive IV fluid therapy along with treatments listed above. Your pet will be closely monitored and you will be kept updated on their progress. Further diagnostic tests may be required. Some patients will need overnight/weekend monitoring and treatment at an emergency hospital.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with us with any questions or concerns about your pets' condition.

PROGRESS EXAMINATION REQUIRED: Date: _____ Time: _____



COOMERA

☎ 07 5502 3333
📍 5/2 Sierra Place
Upper Coomera QLD 4209

CURRUMBIN

☎ 07 5598 4000
📍 7/34 Currumbin Creek Rd
Currumbin QLD 4223

ORMEAU

☎ 07 5549 2120
📍 178 Pascoe Road
Ormeau QLD 4208