

## FACT SHEET

### Gastro-Intestinal Disease

*Gastritis, or gastrointestinal disease, is the term given for inflammation of the stomach and is probably the most common problem seen by veterinary surgeons today. The sort of dogs who suffer from this disorder most often are those that are inclined to eat rubbish, scavenge from bins, chew up toys, or eat foreign material. There are many other causes of stomach irritation, some of which are uncertain but may involve allergies to certain ingredients or chemical additives contained in many modern day pet foods.*

#### Signs and symptoms

If your pet is suffering from gastritis, the symptoms will be easy to detect. You may notice any combination of the following: diarrhoea, vomiting, abdominal pain, constipation, excessive gas, weight loss, difficulty swallowing, excessive drinking and lack of appetite.

These symptoms are the body's natural attempts at elimination, some dogs will instinctively try and remedy things by eating grass to try to stimulate vomiting.

#### Treatment

If you suspect that the cause of your dog's gastritis is a foreign body, i.e. a toy, ball or sock has been eaten, then it can mean an emergency operation to have the blockage removed and your veterinary surgeon should be contacted immediately.

If however it is an acute gastritis, which is not caused by a foreign body, then the following treatment is recommended:

First, withhold all food for at least 24 hours to allow the stomach to settle down. Leave fresh water available, though if vomiting is occurring it is best to offer ice cubes to lick every couple of hours as encouraging too much drinking will aggravate vomiting and stomach irritation. After 24 hours, slowly start to introduce very small quantities of food. A bland diet of chicken and rice or scrambled egg would be suitable at this point.

It is very important to eliminate the possibility of the pet having an allergy to an additive present within its usual diet. An elimination diet is the only answer to discover if this is the case. All of the Naturediet range is free from chemical additives such as preservatives, flavourings and colourings and are easily digestible, so are unlikely to cause a reaction.

Garlic is a particularly good remedy for pets that are prone to gastritis; this is because it acts as a tonic to the digestive system, a natural antibiotic, encourages the normal function of the gut and helps to deter worm infestations.

#### How can Naturediet help?

It is now recognised that diet is a very important factor in the management of gastro intestinal disease.

For dogs, a large percentage of chronic cases will actually respond to a high fibre diet. Fibre improves the consistency of the food and slows down the speed of digested food, passing through the colon. This provides more time for the water and electrolytes to be absorbed, resulting in a better faecal consistency.

All Naturediet products contain an inclusion of dietary fibre to improve the environment for bowel bacteria, improving digestion and therefore faecal consistency. Naturediet Senior/Lite has an elevated amount of added fibre and would therefore be an excellent diet to choose if your pet is prone to this problem.

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We care what goes into our food, because you care what goes into your pet