

MANAGEMENT OF NON-SPECIFIC GASTROENTERITIS ("UPSET TUMMIES")

Cases of gastroenteritis are common in dogs and cats. There are many causes ranging from very mild infections to foreign bodies (ingested toys, bones, stones etc.), to the very severe life threatening conditions of Parvovirus or renal failure.

ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS IS TO ENSURE YOUR PET HAS BEEN FULLY VACCINATED (AT EIGHT WEEKS AND THEN TWELVE WEEKS OF AGE). IT IS IMPORTANT FOR YOUR PET TO GET AN ANNUAL CHECK UP AND BOOSTER VACCINATION FOR CONTINUED PROTECTION.

It is very important to distinguish between the mild cases and those requiring immediate intensive treatment. It is not possible to give a simple rule to distinguish these cases but usually if the animal is very bright and alert despite its gastroenteritis, then it will probably respond to the measures outlined below. (however, bear in mind that in some cases, even "simple" cases will require injection to clear them up. Don't let the symptoms persist)

IF YOUR PET HAS GASTROENTERITIS AND IS VERY DULL, LETHARGIC AND OBVIOUSLY UNWELL. YOU SHOULD SEEK VETERINARY TREATMENT IMMEDIATELY.

FOR MILD CASES / SUPPORTIVE TREATMENT WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU:

- ❖ **Fast your pet for 6 – 24 hours depending on it's size. (larger = longer fasting time).**
- ❖ **Give your pet only water to drink, in small and frequent quantities over the fasting period. In some more severe cases, an electrolyte replacement powder can be added to the water.**
- ❖ **Recommence feeding, initially very small quantities of easily digestible foods (e.g. chicken, scrambled eggs, rice and fish). These should be given in 4-6 small meals totaling no more than half the pets usual daily intake. These quantities would then be gradually increased over the following days and ANY MEDICATION SHOULD BE ADDED TO THE FOOD. There are special foods on the market for pets with gastroenteritis to avoid the hassle of having to cook rice and chicken for your pet.**
- ❖ **When your pet has gone 3-4 days without any signs of a recurrence then its own food can be reintroduced. Remember to feed a good quality balanced diet. Milk is best avoided.**

REMEMBER NO TWO CASES ARE EXACTLY ALIKE, IF IN DOUBT GIVE YOUR VET A SHOUT!!!