IS YOUR PET A POOP EATER? (PLEASE TELL YOUR VET BEFORE SHE GETS KISSES!)
BY ROSIE GILBERT, DVM

Poop eating in animals, aka coprophagia, can stem from a number of reasons. Dogs do it more than cats, and female dogs more than males. It has been suggested that pets with a nutritional deficiency may be more prone to it, or dogs that have experienced extreme hunger (think rescued, pregnant, hypothyroid/hyperthyroid, etc.). It may also be an adaptation for pets that are ashamed of going potty in the house, or it can be normal den-cleaning behavior in females.

Other than the stinky breath, coprophagia can cause pets to become infected with parasites that can be passed on to their owners. Opossum and raccoons in this area are known to carry worms, while giardia and coccidia can be shared between dogs. Horses that have just been treated with ivermectin can pass it in their stool at levels too high for certain breeds of dogs to process, leading to neurologic issues. So what can we do?

First of all, your pet should be examined by the vet—and bring a fecal sample! There may be a medical reason that is causing them to not process their food correctly, such as a parasites, endocrine issues, inflammatory bowel disease, exocrine pancreatic insufficiency, pregnancy...the list goes on and on. Let’s rule out a valid reason for your pet needing more calories/nutrition.

There are some products available over the counter or through your veterinarian that work if you feed them to the pet who is making the deliciousness that your coprophagic pet can’t pass up. These products are usually put in the food and contain flavors that may increase the “ick” factor when “processed”. Some of them contain MSG to make the feces extra salty—if you are using these, please be aware pets can have bad reactions to MSG just like humans.

Other things that have worked for some pets are adding Anise seeds (makes poop taste like licorice, so I hear...) or fresh pineapple to the food (canning destroys the enzymes, must be fresh!). A similar way to create an aversion if you can’t control the pooper’s diet is to apply something to the piles outside before turning your dog loose for a trial. Some things that have been successful for our clients: hot sauce, wasabi, cayenne pepper, and my personal favorite, Pop-Rocks. Please keep in mind that any additives can cause gastrointestinal upset, so use with caution!

Training using a command, such as “leave it” and rewarding with a high-value treat can work. Basket muzzles certainly help if you are hiking or in an off-leash area. Picking up poop consistently will sometimes make the pet feel like they don’t have to. Anti-anxiety measures can be helpful too (check out our website for options to decrease anxiety in cats and dogs at www.vikingveterinarycare.com). Most young dogs or newly rescued pets will grow out of it, but not always. Please remember that keeping a “poop-eater” on parasite preventatives is a MUST!

Meet our newest adoption ward resident, Trigger—although our staff wants to rename him “Baker”, since all day long he’s kneading dough, mixing muffins, and making biscuits in the cat tree.

Trigger is a shy but sweet neutered 8-year-old male who is FIV/FeLV negative and up-to-date on his vaccines. He hasn’t been around dogs or cats, but did well with kids in his previous home. Trigger was adopted as a kitten from Bonnie Hays Animal Shelter and returned due to allergies in April. He is available for adoption for $50. Come on by and meet him!
Don’t Get Ticked: Get Ticked Off!

Some of you may have seen in the news the recent case at Dove Lewis of a dog almost euthanized for a sudden decline and paralysis. Right before saying goodbye, an extern was rubbing the dog’s ears and found a tick. Within 10 hours after removal, the dog had completely recovered! (http://katu.com/news/local/vet-intern-finds-tick-hidden-behind-dogs-ear-moments-before-scheduled-euthanasia-dove-lewis-tick-paralysis)

Tick paralysis is caused by prolonged exposure to toxins found in the saliva of certain ticks. Ticks can also be responsible for Ehrlichia, Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, Babesia, and Bartonella (to name a few). With many of our furry friends traveling to the tick-infested regions of Oregon this summer, we wanted to share with you some important information on how to keep them protected:

**Ticks removed in less than 24 hours are MUCH less likely to be able to spread disease.** Check your pet nightly, especially in the armpits, behind (or in) the ears, and between the toes!

**Consider a tick preventative prior to hiking, camping, or traveling outside the Portland Metro area.** Give us a call to discuss your tick prevention options!
- In dogs, Nexgard kills adult fleas and ticks for 30 days after ingestion.
- Revolution is effective against the American Dog Tick, which was the species responsible for the paralysis discussed above, and can be applied topically in dogs or cats.

Be careful to remove the head of the tick using tweezers or other tick removal device with slow, steady traction. Place the tick in a container with isopropyl alcohol to kill it quickly and save it in case identification is necessary. Use caution! Ticks can transmit disease to humans too. Please **DO NOT try to burn out a tick with a match head**, “suffocate” it with Vaseline, or kill it by applying essential oils. The tick should be removed as quickly as possible with the head intact.

Planning a trip and need some advice on the best tick prevention for your pet? Please call us at 971-371-4024.

Need to add a tick remover to your First Aid kit? We have Tick Twisters for $4.50!
NEW PRODUCT

DiaGel®

DiaGel is a combination or a fiber supplement and microencapsulated essential oils that have been shown to be effective against E. coli and Salmonella.

These bacteria occur naturally in the gastrointestinal tract, but can become overgrown due to changes in the gut, causing diarrhea and gas.

When DiaGel Should Be Given

- **Dietary indiscretions or Changes in Diet:** (Food changes after adoption, getting into human food or another animal’s diet, etc)
- **Stress or Environment Changes:** Activities such as boarding, breeding, traveling, showing, or any other activity that may lead to diarrhea.

DiaGel is used as a 1 time dose to help with diarrhea as an alternative to antibiotic treatment. It is a gel given by mouth through a syringe.

Survey Says?

If Viking Veterinary Care were open until 8pm on Tuesday nights, would this benefit you and your pets?

Send us an email or give us a call and let us know what you think!

info@vikingveterinarycare.com
(971)371-4024

THIS MONTHS SPECIALS

- **$15 Rebate when you buy 6 doses of Heartgard and 6 doses of Nexgard**
- **$35 Rebate when you buy 12 doses of Heartgard and 6 doses of Nexgard**
- **$50 Rebate when you buy 12 doses of Heartgard and 12 doses of Nexgard**

Heartgard® Plus
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- **$10 REBATE WHEN YOU BUY 6 DOSES**
- **$50 REBATE WHEN YOU BUY 12 DOSES**

FortiFlora

$5 Rebate when you purchase 1 box