



What is Colitis?

Colitis is **inflammation of the colon**, otherwise known as the **large intestine or bowel**. Inflammation of the colon leads to blunting and shortening of the intestinal villi which normally absorb water and electrolytes from the passing feces. The decrease in water absorption leads to diarrhea.

Clinical Signs of Colitis

- diarrhea (pet needs to go out more frequently and amount is smaller than usual)
- straining while defecating
- sense of urgency
- sometimes frank (red) blood and/or mucous in the feces
- vomiting (occasionally)

Clinical Causes of Colitis

- dietary indiscretion (most common cause)
- dietary sensitivity
- stress
- infection (including *Salmonella*, *Clostridium*, and *E. coli*)
- parasites (including *Giardia*, *Cryptosporidium*, and whipworms).

Treatment

No food for 24 hours (this is not recommended for small dogs) - continue to offer small amounts of water often throughout the day.

Bland Diet – feed a bland diet for at least 5 days to allow the intestinal villi to regrow. Once the diarrhea has resolved, then you can slowly start mixing in their regular diet over the following week.

Examples of a bland diet:

Royal Canin Gastro (available at Veterinary clinics)
Homemade: boiled/steamed plain chicken breast (no skin) + white rice +/- canned pumpkin

Probiotics - give daily for at least one week or at least a week past the end of antibiotic treatment.

- Examples of probiotics:
 - Fortiflora (available at Veterinary clinics)

Pepto Bismol (pink liquid only) - give 1mL per 5kg every 12 hours for a maximum of 2 doses (be aware that this may change the color of their feces to dark green to black).

Pepcid (Famotidine) – Give 0.5-1mg per kg of weight - typically given for 3-7 days (helps if your pet is vomiting/burping).

Antibiotics (Metronidazole) - may be prescribed and helpful in some cases.

