

Could Your Puppy Have Giardia?

As a new puppy buyer you might be bring home more than you know. Giardia is commonly found in the intestines of many animals, including puppies, and can cause such symptoms as mild recurring diarrhea, soft light yellow colored stools, weight loss, listlessness, mucus in the stool, and can lead to other health risks.

So what is Giardia?

Giardia is microscopic parasites that form cysts. These cysts cling to the surface of the infected dog, or they can float free in the mucous lining and pass from the dog when he eliminates (poops). Once passed, the cysts can survive for several months outside the animal if sufficient moisture is present.

How could my puppy come in contact with these cysts?

If your new puppy shared a kennel with another dog that was infected with Giardia, chances are he ingested the cysts by licking the coat of the infected dog, the floor or surrounding area where the infected dog was kept, or he might have actually ingested the feces that contained the Giardia cysts. Once ingested, the cysts break open, in the new host, thus repeating the infection cycle.

Can my new puppy get Giardia even if he has not been around an infected dog?

Yes. Giardia can also be found in streams or other water sources, and a dog left in unclean conditions can actually re-infect itself causing a vicious cycle.

What type of treatments are available for Giardia?

If you suspect that your new puppy may have Giardia, it is always best to schedule a visit to your veterinary clinic. Be prepared for your visit by collecting a fecal sample to take with you. Using the sample you supply, your vet can perform the necessary tests to determine if your dog actually has Giardia, or some other disorder. If Giardia is diagnosed, some of the treatments available today include; Metronidazole (Flagyl), Furazolidone (Neftin), Tinadazole, Fenbendazole (Panacur), and Albendazole (Valbanzen). Your vet will prescribe the best treatment for your new puppy.

My dog is not infected now, but how can I prevent him from coming in contact with Giardia?

The best way to prevent contact with, and the spread of Giardia, is to be sure your new puppy does not drink from possible contaminated water sources such as; rivers, streams, and or stagnant standing water. Another way to help eliminate the risk of Giardia is to keep your pet away from pets that you don't know, that could possibly be infected. Popular places like dog parks, dog beaches, and other pet meeting areas can be fun, but is it worth the risk of your puppy's health?

Short note about the author

Penny DiLoreto is a Licensed Veterinary Assistant, and a breeder of AKC Boston Terrier puppies. Her website, <http://www.puppies-dot-com.com> provides tips on a wide variety of topics including; Frequently Asked Questions, Puppy Training Tips, Breeder Selection Tips, and more.

Author: Penny DiLoreto

Article downloaded from page eioba.com