

Cystitis In Dogs

Cystitis refers to the inflammation of the bladder and is a common issue in dogs, often caused by bacterial infections, but it can also result from bladder stones or other underlying conditions. Understanding cystitis and its symptoms is crucial for ensuring your furry friend's health.



What is Cystitis?

Cystitis occurs when the bladder becomes inflamed, usually due to a urinary tract infection (UTI). While bacteria are the most common culprits, other issues, such as bladder stones or tumours, can also lead to cystitis. This condition is particularly prevalent in female dogs, as their shorter urethra makes it easier for bacteria to reach the bladder.

Signs Your Dog May Have Cystitis



If you suspect your dog has cystitis, watch for these common symptoms:

- **Increased Urination:** Your dog may need to urinate more frequently, often passing only small amounts at a time due to bladder discomfort.

- **Straining:** They may strain or squat for extended periods when trying to urinate.
- **Accidents Indoors:** Your dog may have accidents in the house, even if they are normally well-trained.
- **Blood in Urine:** Look for signs of blood or a reddish tint in their urine.
- **Foul-Smelling Urine:** A strong, unpleasant odour may accompany the urine.
- **Discomfort:** Your dog may appear uncomfortable or in pain when urinating.

Do Dogs Recover from Cystitis on Their Own?

If your dog has cystitis due to a UTI, it won't resolve without veterinary treatment. They will likely require antibiotics to eliminate the infection, and pain relief may be necessary to ease their discomfort. It's important to visit your vet promptly, as they can determine the exact cause of the cystitis and prescribe appropriate treatment. Your vet may request a urine sample to identify any underlying issues.



How to Collect a Urine Sample from Your Dog

To help your vet diagnose cystitis, you may need to collect a urine sample. Here's a step-by-step guide:

What You'll Need:

- A clean, dry sample pot (available at your vet or pharmacy)
- A shallow, clean saucer (optional, for small or female dogs)

- Disposable gloves (optional)
- A pen or pencil for labelling

Instructions:

1. **Timing:** Try to collect the sample first thing in the morning.
2. **Observation:** Wait for your dog to urinate. When they do, carefully place your pot or saucer in the stream to collect the urine.
3. **Transfer:** If using a saucer, carefully pour the urine into the sample pot.
4. **Label:** Mark the pot with your name, your dog's name, and the time and date of collection.
5. **Delivery:** Take the sample to your vet as soon as possible. If there's a delay, store it in the fridge until you can deliver it.

Tip: Avoid closely following your dog while they urinate, as this may make them uncomfortable.

Recovery from Cystitis

Most dogs respond well to treatment and improve quickly. If your vet prescribes antibiotics, be sure to complete the entire course, even if symptoms seem to disappear early. If symptoms persist or worsen, further examinations, such as cystocentesis (a sterile method of collecting urine directly from the bladder) or imaging tests like X-rays or ultrasounds, may be necessary.



Preventing Cystitis

While not all cases of cystitis can be prevented, there are steps you can take to reduce your dog's risk:

- **Hydration:** Always ensure your dog has access to fresh water and encourage regular bathroom breaks.
- **Grooming:** Keep long-haired breeds well-groomed to help maintain cleanliness.
- **Special Diets:** Follow any dietary recommendations from your vet to prevent issues like bladder stones or crystals.

In some cases, underlying health issues, such as bladder tumours, may be the root cause, and prevention is not always possible.