



# COCCIDIOSIS



## SPRINGS

VETERINARY CARE

### WHAT IS COCCIDIOSIS?

Coccidiosis is an intestinal tract infection caused by a one-celled organism (a protozoa) called coccidia.

Because coccidia live inside a pet's intestinal tract and can cause diarrhea, they are often confused with intestinal worms, but coccidia are not worms. They are microscopic parasites that live within the cells that line the intestine.

### HOW DID MY PET CONTRACT COCCIDIA?

- ▶ Swallowing soil or feces with the immature form of coccidia called an oocyst
- ▶ Living in group environments with exposure to contaminated soil
- ▶ Eating mice, flies or other insects that may have eaten oocysts
- ▶ Stresses of environmental changes may exacerbate coccidiosis

### INFECTION:

- ▶ Common in puppies, both dogs and cats each have their own species of coccidia
- ▶ Minimal effect on humans
- ▶ Sporulation of coccidia oocysts can occur same day
- ▶ Dogs may shed oocysts in feces yet can remain asymptomatic

 [SpringsVet.com](http://SpringsVet.com)

 333 Highway 290 E, Ste. 415  
Dripping Springs, TX 78620

512.829.6140



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### SIGNS OF COCCIDIA:

- ✓ Mild to severe (watery or bloody) diarrhea
- ✓ Decreased appetite
- ✓ Weight loss/lack of weight gain
- ✓ Dehydration
- ✓ Vomiting

### PREVENTION:

- ▶ Remove dog's feces regularly from yards
- ▶ Wash bedding regularly
- ▶ Thoroughly clean pet's living areas with steam or boiling water
- ▶ Have your veterinarian conduct regular parasite screens
- ▶ Practice good hygiene when handling your pets

### TREATMENT:

- ▶ An annual wellness exam with parasite screens
- ▶ Prescription medication (an antibiotic) is available to treat coccidia and diarrhea
  - Often probiotics and anti-diarrheal medicants may be needed
- ▶ Severe infections may require a repeat treatment which can last 5-25 days
- ▶ If dehydrated, other medications/treatments such as IV fluids may be required
- ▶ Using all prescribed medication as directed

We are committed as your veterinary partner in your pet's health and longevity. We strongly encourage you to schedule an appointment if you notice signs or symptoms of coccidiosis.

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