

Healthy pet

Dealing with poop-eating pups, protecting your pet from chemical overload, and a healthier pet bed.



Ask Lyndall



Q. Why do dogs eat poop?

A. Coprophagia, or eating faeces, can be a bad habit learned from mum – mother dogs clean their pups and the whelping area by licking up everything, so if a puppy's area is not kept clean, they can take on this job themselves. It can also be due to boredom, if a dog is left alone for long periods. Or, it could indicate a nutritional deficiency or digestive problem. To break the habit:

- Keep the yard clean; monitor when your dog poos, and clean up straight away.
- Offer a natural, raw diet, including offal and leafy greens which provide nerve-soothing minerals and B-group vitamins. Add a digestive enzyme and probiotic supplement to balance and support gut function.
- Ask your vet to check for intestinal parasites.

Animal naturopath Lyndall Pinchen is the owner of Canine Vitality Naturopathic service for dogs. www.caninevitality.com.au

Chemical overload

Your pet is just as much at risk from environmental toxins as you are:

- Don't over-vaccinate. Ask your vet to titre-test to check for individual disease immunity. Opt for three-yearly vaccines.
- Eliminate processed foods.
- Chemical-based flea, tick and worming treatments can contain insecticides linked to neurological problems, cancers, and liver and kidney damage.
- Offer filtered water in stainless steel bowls; clean them regularly.
- Avoid unnecessary medications, especially antibiotics.
- Don't use chemical-based household and lawn-care products. Humans can change clothes and shoes, but animals can't change their fur or footpads. Whatever collects on their feet and coat is absorbed into their body.
- Offer milk thistle, chlorophyll, probiotics and antioxidants to support immune function and detoxification.



Diarrhoea? Five to try

Slippery elm

Fast your pet for six to 12 hours, offering only water. Then offer clear broth, and if it is tolerated, add cooked organic chicken breast, mashed pumpkin and ¼ teaspoon slippery elm powder per 5 kg body weight. Continue for 2-3 days.

Skip grains and preservatives

Offer a raw, natural diet; add a digestive enzyme to prevent upset while transitioning.

Probiotics and glutamine

A dairy-free probiotic will rebalance gut flora, while glutamine heals the gut wall. Give 1-3 teaspoons twice daily in food.

Herbs

Agrimony, raspberry leaf, chamomile, fennel, and marshmallow soothe the digestive tract, counter infection, and ease diarrhoea.

Homeopathy

If diarrhoea is due to food intolerance or infection, give Arsenicum album 30C, one dose three times daily for 3-5 days.



Lyndall's pick

Unlike many pet beds, Henry Hottie beds are free from harmful chemical residues, and use thermally-bonded fibres which the animal's body heat activates to make it warm. www.henryhottie.com

