



FOCUS ON....

Poop



What Should Dog Poop Look Like?

When your dog is healthy, his poop shows it. It can be large, firm and range in shades of brown. A sudden change, like blood in your dog's stool, tells you something is wrong. Keep reading to learn how you can spot health problems simply by looking at your dog's poop.

The proof of a pet's digestive health is in the poop. There are several ways to evaluate your dog's digestive health:

Frequency: your dog should poop at least one time a day.

Colour: may depend on the food you feed your dog

Consistency: firm stools are ideal

What does blood in dog stool look like, and what does it mean?

If your dog is pooping blood, it is a sign of a problem. Blood in your dog's poop (or stool) can show up as bright red with streaks, or black and tar like. If your dog is pooping blood, or you suspect he is, you need to visit your vet. Good idea to take a sample or photo; it all helps the vet to understand the problem.

Black and tar-like: may indicate blood that has been digested higher up the gut.

Bright red with streaks: may indicate that a little blood has been digested, if at all.

How are dog stools evaluated for health?

There are many characteristics to look at beyond the presence of blood in dog stool. They include:

- Stool form
- Odour
- Faecal density
- Stickiness
- Food digestibility
- Nutrient absorption
- Stool bacterial levels
- Composition
- Presence of parasites

What role does microflora have in your dog's digestive health?

A healthy gut microflora balance can help promote a healthy immune system, healthy digestibility and good stool quality. A good balance of microflora in your dog's digestive system can also:-

Produce nutrients, Promote nutrient absorption, Boost overall health.

How to promote your dog's digestive health?

You don't have to wait until your dog has a digestive issue. Here are some proactive steps you can take today:

- Pay attention to your dog's poop
- Determine what is normal for him
- Take note of blood or mucus in your dog's poop
- Talk to your veterinarian about changes you see
- Promote your dog's digestive health with a probiotic and good diet with roughage.

Most mild changes in dog stool colour are related to dietary changes and aren't cause for alarm.

But poop colour and consistency can be an indicator of serious health problems, which is why you need to make your dog's business *your* business.

Check the 4 C's

Consistency*
Coating
Contents
Color



*On a scale of 1-7 according to Bristol Stool Chart

Constipation

1 SUPER DRY AND HARD, PEBBLE LIKE

Separate hard lumps and difficult to expel. Indicates constipation. You dog might be having too much dietary fiber, or not enough water.

Good and Healthy

2 FIRM, BUT NOT TOO HARD

Ideal! Relatively long shaped with a few cracks on the surface. Should leave no residue when picked up.

3 LONG SHAPED WITH SOME MOIST

Ideal! Has some moist on the surface with little segmentation. Leaves residue when picked up but maintains shape.

4 LONG SHAPED, SMOOTH AND SOFT

Also ideal! Like a sausage with some moist and little to no crack or segmentation on the surface. Leaves residue when picked up but maintains shape.

For any of the below softer consistencies, try adding some fiber such as psyllium husk or sweet potato. If it doesn't resolve in 24 hours, check with vet to be safe.

5 IN PILES, MOSIT AND SOFT

Passed easily with some shape in piles. Leaves residue and loses form when picked up. Early stages of diarrhea but should resolve quickly for healthy dogs.

6 MUSHY PIECES, NO DEFINED SHAPE

Expelled as piles or spots with little shape. Leaves lots of residues when picked up. Should be monitoring your dog's diet and well being.

7 WATERY, NO SOLID PIECES

Expelled as spurts of liquid poo. Should be monitoring your dog's diet and well being.



Your dog's poo colour

Check it before you chuck it.



Brown: A normal, healthy poo can range from light to dark brown depending on the diet fed.

← **The Perfect Poo Colour**



Black: Indicates bleeding from anywhere in the upper gastrointestinal tract such as the mouth, stomach or small intestines.



Red Streaks: Indicates bleeding in the lower digestive tract.



Grey or Yellow: Related to bile in the stool due to problems with your dog's liver, gallbladder or pancreas.



White Spots: May be evidence that your dog has intestinal worms.



White and Chalky: Your dog's diet may be too high in calcium, which can lead to constipation.

What Your Dog Eats Matters

The advice of any veterinarian is, "What goes in, must come out." The best way to prevent problems is to know exactly what your dog is eating. Here's how:

Feed a consistent diet of the highest quality dog food you can.

Limit human food. Even pet-safe people food can cause problems in dogs with allergies, sensitive tummies, or if they simply have too much of a yummy treat. Make sure family members know what not to feed your dog.

Prevent your pup from rummaging in trash and compost piles.

Know what's growing in your garden: mushrooms and many types of plants (including berries) can make your dog sick.

Keep medicines, household trash, cleaning products, lawn and garden, car-care, and pest-control chemicals out of reach because they all pose serious threats to your dog's health if ingested. The bottom line: if you wouldn't want a child to eat it, you don't want your dog to eat it.