

Is My Dog Sick?

How can you tell if your dog is sick? There are quite a few easy to tell signs that an animal is not feeling well. One of the first is if they are not being themselves. If your normally active dog is just lying around and not wanting to play or go for their usual walk, something is wrong. This is one of the first signs that you will notice when something is wrong.

Another thing to look for is a change in your dogs eating habits. Are they hungrier than normal? Are they not eating much at all? If the dog is not eating, keep an eye on their weight. If they loose too much weight take them to the vet. If your dog is hungrier than normal and you are giving them the amount of food they are asking for, make sure they don't gain too much weight. Being over weight by even a few pounds can take years off a dogs life. However, if your dog is eating more than usual and still loosing weight, get them to the vet as soon as possible. This is a major sign of terminal cancer.

Now that we have covered eating habits, let's go to the other end of your dog. How are his/her bathroom times? Are they normal? If your dog has a loose stool for more than 2 days, try an Imodium. If there is blood in the stool, then go to the emergency vet! If your dog looks to be straining to poop, try giving them a natural stool softer. If your pet is straining to pee, check the pee for blood. Both straining and blood in the pee can be signs of a bladder infection.

Another sign of heath issues can be skin and coat. If the fur is falling out, this could be a sign of general poor heath, skin disease, or allergies. Although allergies are rare in our breed, they do still occur. If fur is falling out, I would suggest that you first make sure your dog was not walking on any lawn that was recently fertilized as this can discolor the coat and make it fall out. Next, I would take the dog to the vet to see if they can determine what kind of problem is causing the hair loss. Another sign of poor health in your pet is how elastic the skin is. If you pinch the dogs skin and it does not go right back in place, then there is a health problem sapping the water from your dogs skin and you had better to head to your vet to find out why they are getting dehydrated.

A way to check for some neurological issues with a dog is to get them to stand still, pick up their paw and put it down with the pads facing up.



Example of a dog's foot test.
Submitted by: Diane R Mitchell

The dog should immediately pick its' paw up and put it back down correctly. If not, then the dog is either well trained to leave their foot where you put it (to their discomfort) or something major is wrong.

Lastly, your dogs' gums and tongue can tell you a lot about how they are feeling. I recommend checking your dogs gums weekly until you know what their normal color is. If your pet's gums become pale, this is a sign they are definitely not feeling well. Now things like exercise, hard play, and sleeping can all change the color of gums. Pale gums are a sure sign of problems. My first suggestion would be to make sure your pet has had some water, then food and if they refuse either, I would take them to the vet as soon as possible.

These are some easy ways to tell if your pet is not feeling well, they are by no means the only ones, just some major ones that always indicate an underlying health issue. Your pet should always go in for regular check ups with the vet on a yearly basis. For senior pets, twice yearly visits to the vet is recommended as well as blood work to guard against any old age health problems and cancer.

Author: Diane R Mitchell