

# Pet Cystitis

## Female Dogs Suffer More

You're taking your dog for a walk. She stops more than usual to do her business, and you notice she is straining to urinate. You might even notice a little blood in the urine as she finishes.

Contact your veterinarian. Your dog could be displaying signs of cystitis—an increasingly common bladder condition affecting dogs.

## Female Dogs Suffer More

Cystitis, or inflammation or infection of the bladder, is more common in female dogs but can be more serious in male dogs. Male dogs have a narrower urethra than female dogs, making it easier for it to become blocked by bladder stones.

## The Cause of Cystitis

Cystitis is generally caused by a bacterial infection. Bacteria usually enters the bladder from the fecal area. It can also travel from the kidneys or through an infection elsewhere in the body and enter the bloodstream.

Bladder stones, polyps and tumors can also cause cystitis.

Your veterinarian will test the urine and look for bacteria. Cystitis is commonly treated with antibiotics.

**More than 3.5 million in veterinary claims for cystitis were filed by VPI Pet Insurance policyholders in 2007, making it the sixth most common health condition treated for dogs.**

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## Preventing Cystitis

Make sure your dog is not holding his bladder for long periods of time. Allow your dog ample opportunity to go outside to urinate.

If your dog has had cystitis, your veterinarian might recommend adding salt to his food to make him consume more water, thus causing frequent urination to flush his system. Canned food also contains extra water.

Keep your dog at a healthy weight. If your dog is obese, the area around the genitals becomes fatty and makes it harder to keep clean. This can allow bacteria to build up and eventually make its way into the bladder.

As always, ask your veterinarian for the best way to keep your dog happy and healthy.



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