

# COCCIDIOSIS

COCCIDIA are protozoan (one-celled) organisms that can infect the intestine. The disease, “coccidiosis,” most often affects young puppies and kittens, but can infect animals of any age. It is seen most often in puppies and kittens that come from places where large numbers of animals are together, such as pet stores and animal shelters.

Older animals often do not show clinical signs of the disease unless they become stressed. Even though no clinical signs may be present, if the pet is infected, it can still be a “carrier” capable of spreading the infection to other animals.

**CLINICAL SIGNS of the disease include diarrhea, dehydration, weight loss, and loss of appetite.** Central nervous system signs, such as seizures, can be seen in the advanced cases. Be aware this disease may severely weaken the pet making it more susceptible to other diseases at the same time or in the near future.

**DIAGNOSIS** of coccidiosis is confirmed by finding oocysts (eggs) of the organism in the bowel movements. Sometimes it is found on routine internal parasite examination even though the pet does not show clinical signs of diarrhea.

The disease is spread and contracted by animals licking their feet after the feet have been contaminated or eating out of contaminated food dishes or water bowls. For this reason, sanitation is a very important aspect of control.

**CONTROL** of the disease is through the maintenance of **GOOD HYGEINE & SANITATION**. Food dishes should be washed daily. It is important to maintain a sanitary environment by removing all pet stools from the area on a daily basis.

**PROGNOSIS** is good provided treatment is initiated fairly early. *Severely dehydrated pets require very intensive therapy to be saved from death.*

**TREATMENT** requires specific drugs. Good nursing care and fluid consumption are also very important. Please follow the below listed home care instructions: