

## Angelique Fuller, DVM



*Dr. Angelique Fuller is the owner/veterinarian at King's Crossing Animal Hospital in Oak Ridge, North Carolina. She received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Design and Production for Theater from The North Carolina School of the Arts in 1997, a Master of Science in Animal Health Science from The North Carolina Agricultural and Technical University in 2003 and a Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine from North Carolina State University in 2007. After graduation, Dr. Fuller worked full time at Guilford Jamestown Veterinary Hospital in Greensboro and as a relief emergency veterinarian at Carolina Veterinary Specialist and Emergency Services of Forsyth County. She is a member of the American Veterinary Medical Association.*

*Dr. Fuller has had a wide variety of life experiences and finds that her art and medicine backgrounds blend together seamlessly. Growing up, she has always had a love for animals and realized early that a pet's health and well-being played an important role in the human-animal bond.*

*Dr. Fuller, husband Brian and their son enjoy sharing their home with a cat named Burman and two dogs (Duncan and Goosie). They also have five beautiful chickens that they adore!*

## Canine GI Upset – When to Seek Medical Attention

### Symptoms of GI upset in dogs

GI upset could be as obvious as diarrhea and vomiting, or less noticeable things like decreased appetite, burping, or increased gas. Some dogs will seek out grass to eat, others will drool more. Some are tense when you feel their bellies and other can even become aggressive due to pain. The most common of these symptoms we see is diarrhea. Diarrhea is increased frequency of bowel movements, loose stools, or an increased amount of stool. It's important as a pet owner to note what your dog's stool looks like normally, so you can recognize any changes.

### Causes of diarrhea in a dog

There are many, many reasons for a dog to have diarrhea. Typically, we try to look at the age and other overall health of the dog and then determine our top differential causes.

One of the most common causes of acute diarrhea is dietary indiscretion – ie – dogs eating things they should not eat or a sudden change in diet. Other more serious causes include toxins, Parvovirus, Salmonella, Clostridium, Exocrine Pancreatic Insufficiency, pancreatitis, liver disease, foreign body, Addison's Disease, parasites and food allergy.

### Determining the cause of diarrhea in dogs

Gathering a complete history is very important. Next, we collect a fecal sample. We note the consistency, color and if there is mucus or blood present. We then make a fecal smear to assess bacteria population and to screen for certain parasites, such as Giardia. A fecal float is used to check for parasite ova and oocysts. In most cases we can formulate a plan based on the information we get from these simple diagnostics, physical exam and history. However, additional tests may be needed to solve the problem or if the diarrhea is chronic and not acute.

### Treating diarrhea in dogs

We treat this by addressing the underlying problem. If it is due to dietary indiscretion, then often we will have the owners feed a bland diet and slowly reintroduce their normal food after two to three days. Sometimes, additional medications to slow things down a bit and help to decrease volume or frequency of diarrhea are prescribed. Parasites require a dewormer and follow up. More severe causes may require hospitalization and fluid therapy.

### When should you seek medical advice for you dog?

As a general rule, I think diarrhea lasting longer than 24 hours should be addressed. Early treatment is essential to prevent more serious illness such as pancreatitis, vomiting, anorexia, etc. If other clinical signs are present, such as vomiting or lack of appetite, then you should seek immediate help. If your dog is a puppy or unvaccinated for Parvovirus get help as well. Most cases will resolve within several days with treatment. It is important to monitor your dog closely during this time to ensure they are responding to the treatment your veterinarian has prescribed. Always follow up with your veterinarian as directed, which will often include the rechecking of a fecal sample.



**King's Crossing  
Animal Hospital**

336-644-7606



Angel Fuller, DVM

See ad for King's Crossing Animal Hospital on page 18