

# Emergency Information

In the event of a true emergency, please take your foster dog to an emergency center. An emergency is any situation in which a foster dog's life is in danger. What constitutes an emergency?

1. Severe illness includes lethargy, severe vomiting, and/or diarrhea or signs that the dog is in pain.
2. Any kind of traumatic injury

If the injuries or illness are severe and the dog's life is in danger, **please take the dog to the nearest veterinarian.** If it is after hours there are 3 emergency hospitals in Louisville.

Please contact any DCDR board member ASAP:

**Shannon Riley - 502-727-7088**

**Christy Duff - 502-931-7076**

**Jeff Duff - 502-322-6681**

**Melissa Kleber- 502-592-3343**

**Melissa Miller - 502-291-4351**

**Carlyn Nugent - 502-526-2128**

**Todd Bybee - 502-618-6215**

## Emergency Hospitals:

- **Blue Pearl (formerly LVSES)**  
*DCDR's preferred emergency center*  
13160 Magisterial Drive Louisville, KY 40223  
(502) 244-3036
- **MVS (Metropolitan Veterinary Specialists)**  
11800 Capital Way Louisville, KY 40299  
(502) 266-7007
- **Jefferson Animal Hospital**  
4504 Outer Loop Louisville, KY 40291  
(502) 961-6525

***If the emergency is dire and if time does not allow you to get to LVSES,  
MVS and Jefferson are acceptable alternatives.***



## Derby City Dog Rescue

...saving hearts one paw at a time.

### Signs that your foster dog needs to see a vet...

DCDR covers all medical expenses for our foster dogs. We use our preferred vets because we have a relationship with them and trust our foster dogs in their care. If you would rather take your foster dog to your regular vet, the cost will be your responsibility. *You agree to be responsible for food, daily care, and monthly flea/tick/heartworm preventatives.*

Sometimes it can be difficult to tell if a dog needs to be examined by a veterinarian. If you are concerned about your foster dog, contact DCDR to discuss the dog's symptoms. We can help decide if the dog needs veterinary care. If there is ever a true emergency, go straight to an emergency clinic (preferably Blue Pearl) and contact DCDR. We have provided a list of signs that your foster dog might be ill and also a list of symptoms that constitute an emergency.

Contact DCDR and seek veterinary care if your dog has any of the following symptoms for **more than one or two days**:

- Poor appetite
- Lethargy
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Lameness
- Weakness
- Excessive salivation
- Excessive thirst (increased water intake)
- Frequent and/or inappropriate urination
- Constipation
- Excessive scratching or dull, dry, or flaky hair coat
- Shaking head and/or scratching ears
- Wheezing or frequent panting
- Nasal discharge or congestion
- Displays of mild-moderate pain (crying when a specific area is touched or action is taken).

**Immediately contact DCDR and go to an emergency hospital if you observe any of the following signs:**

- Hit by a car or other major trauma
- Blue, white, or very pale gums
- Labored breathing
- Collapse or loss of consciousness
- Dizziness, imbalance, or circling
- Inability to walk
- Extremely bloated abdomen
- Constant vomiting or retching

- Seizures that are constant or don't stop. (A note on seizures: epilepsy is common in dogs and not always an emergency.) Contact Shannon or Christy if your foster dog has a seizure and we can decide together if the dog needs to go to an emergency clinic or wait to see a regular vet the following day. *If your foster dog has a continuous seizure that doesn't stop, go straight to an emergency clinic.*
- Signs of severe acute pain (such as crying out very loudly and excessively)
- Body temperature taken rectally over 104 or under 98. NOTE: **\*Do not leave a dog in the car unattended.** Temperatures can rise very quickly inside of a car even if the windows are cracked. It is extremely dangerous to leave a dog in a car unattended even for a few minutes during the warm seasons.

**Steps to take if your foster dog is ill**

- Contact a DCDR board member if your foster dog is ill to approve funding for treatment. Shannon and Christy are the primary contacts for medical treatment, but you may also contact another board member (see Emergency page for all numbers).

**Shannon: (502) 727-7088**

**Christy: (502) 931-7076**

- If your foster dog needs to be seen by a veterinarian, DCDR's preferred vets are:
  - **East Bullitt Animal Clinic**-Routine care such as vaccinations, spay/neuter, and illness.
    - 10774 Hwy 44 Mount Washington, KY 40047
    - Phone: 502-904-9800
    - (On Call Emergency Care is available)
    - Business Hours: Monday: 8:30am to 6:00pm
    - Tuesday: 8:30am to 4:00pm
    - Wednesday: 8:30am to 6:00pm
    - Thursday: 8:30am to 6:00pm
    - Friday: 8:30am to 6:00pm
  - **Dixie Animal Hospital**-Routine care such as vaccinations, spay/neuter, and illness. Has extended weekend/evening hours for urgent care.
    - 9428 Dixie Highway
    - Louisville, KY 40272
    - Phone: 502-937-2987
    - After hours: 502-366-6214
    - Business Hours: M-F 9 a.m.-8 p.m.
    - Saturday 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
    - Sunday noon-4 p.m.
  - **Elk Creek Animal Hospital**-Orthopedic treatments and also an option for regular vetting if East Bullitt or Dixie are not available
    - 57 Commerce Drive Fisherville, KY 40023
    - Phone: 502-477-1477
    - Emergency Line during office hours: 502-477-1477
    - Emergency line after hours: 502-422-2571.
    - Business hours: M-F: 7:30-5:30 pm
    - Sat 8:00am-12:00pm

- **Iroquois Animal Hospital**-heartworm treatment  
5017 S 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Louisville, Ky 40214  
Phone: 502-366-1940  
Business hours: M, W, F 8:00am-5:00pm  
Sat 9:30am-12:00pm
- **All Pets Veterinary Center**  
1219 Dorsey Lane Louisville, Ky 40223  
Phone: 502-384-0551  
Business hours: M, T, Th, F: 8:00am-7:00pm  
W: 8:00am-4:00pm  
Sat: 9:00am-1:00pm

## Physical Exam Checklist for Pets

To identify an illness or abnormal situation, you must first be able to recognize what is normal for your pet. You know your pet better than anyone else and will have to decide when an abnormal situation warrants professional help. Sometimes the condition is so serious it leaves no doubt. Frequently, the changes are subtle or happen over a long period of time and it is important that they are recognized and addressed. Early recognition of a serious problem can save your pet's life.

The following information teaches you how to examine your pet and determine what is normal. The primary suggestion is to give your pet a "mini" physical exam occasionally when there is nothing wrong so you get used to what is normal for your pet. Record the normal values using the guide at the end of this article.

### Hands-on Physical Exam



Before starting a hands-on exam, stand back and look at your pet for a few minutes. The posture, breathing, activity level, and general appearance can tell you a lot.

Now start the physical exam, making sure to look at the following areas. Consult a veterinarian if an abnormal condition exists or you are concerned about any exam findings. A hands-on physical exam in the comfort of your own home is the best way to learn what is normal for your pet.

#### Nose

Normal: Moist and clean

Abnormal:

- Dry or cracked
- Nasal discharge (such as thick greenish mucus)
- Bleeding



#### Skin

The skin is an important indicator of overall health. Feel your pet's skin and haircoat, noting any masses or sores. Many older pets can develop accumulations of fatty tissue known as lipomas. In order to differentiate these benign masses from cancerous ones, it is important to have your pet evaluated by your veterinarian and have an aspirate performed. This simple and

quick procedure can help your veterinarian determine the nature of the lump and help you decide if further tests or treatment are needed.

#### Normal

- Shiny and smooth haircoat
- Soft and unbroken skin
- Minimal odor

#### Abnormal

- Sparse or patchy haircoat
- Open sores or sores
- Oily or greenish discharge
- Foul or rancid odor

### Eyes

#### Normal

- Bright, moist, and clear
- Centered between the eyelid
- Pupils equal in size
- Whites of the eye should not appear colored (such as red or yellow) and should have only a few visible blood vessels
- Pupils shrink equally when bright light is shined into either eye
- Pupils enlarge equally when the eyes are held closed or the room darkened.



#### Abnormal

- Dull, sunken eyes. Eyes that appear dry. Thick discharge from eyes.
- One or both eyes not centered.
- Pupils unequal in size.
- Abnormal colors that indicate problems are yellow (jaundice), or red (bloodshot).
- Pupils fail to respond or respond differently when bright light is shined into either eye.
- Pupils fail to respond or respond differently to the dark.

Pay close attention to the color of the whites of your pet's eyes, as well as the pupils' response to changes in light.

## Ears

Chronic ear problems are common in pets, and are often a result of allergies to inhaled pollen (like hay fever in people) that are then complicated by secondary infections with bacteria or fungus. Ear infections can be painful and head shaking can lead to an accumulation of blood (or hematoma) in the floppy part of the ear called the pinna.



### Normal

- Skin smooth and without wounds
- Clean and dry
- Almost odor-free
- Typical carriage for breed
- Pain-free

### Abnormal

- Wounds or scabs on skin. Lumps or bumps on skin. Any sign of rash
- Crust, moisture, or other discharge in ear canal
- Any strong odor from the ear
- Atypical carriage for breed; for example, a droopy ear in a breed with normally erect ears
- Painful or swollen ears.

Your pet's ears should be clean and odor-free.

## Mouth

### Normal

- Teeth are clean and white
- Gums are uniformly pink.



### Abnormal

- Tartar accumulation around the base of the teeth
- The gums are red, pale, inflamed, or sore in appearance.

Press on the gum tissue with your finger or thumb and release quickly. Watch the color return to the gums. This checks the capillary refill time (CRT) and is a crude assessment of how well the heart and circulatory system are working. A normal CRT is 1 to 2 seconds for color to return. This can be a difficult test to interpret sometimes (for example, if your pet has dark or pigmented gums), and should not be relied upon as definitive evidence that your pet is sick or healthy.

Gums should be pink -- teeth should be clean and white.

## Neck, Chest, and Breathing

### Normal

- It is difficult to hear the pet breathe at all except when he or she is panting.
- The chest wall moves easily to and fro during respiration.
- Most of the act of breathing is performed by the chest wall.



### Abnormal

- Any unusual noise heard while the pet is breathing could indicate a problem, especially if the noise is new for the pet.
- There is noticeable effort by the pet to move the chest wall.
- The abdomen is actively involved in the act of inhaling and exhaling.
- The pet stands with elbows held out further than normal or, is unable to rest or lie down.

## Abdomen (Stomach)

Touch and feel (palpate) the stomach. Start just behind the ribs and gently press your hands into the abdomen, feeling for abnormalities. If your pet has just eaten, you may be able to feel an enlargement in the left part of the abdomen just under the ribs. Proceed toward the rear of the body, passing your hands gently over the abdomen.

### Normal

- No lumps, bumps, or masses
- No discomfort on palpation
- No distension of the abdominal wall.



### Abnormal

- Any lump, bump, or mass may be abnormal.
- Palpation causes groaning or difficulty breathing. Any evidence or indication of pain is a serious finding. Use caution to avoid being bitten.
- The abdomen feels hard or tense and it appears distended.

Any pain felt during an abdominal palpation could be a problem. Consult your veterinarian.

## Skin Turgor Test

The skin turgor test may be the most helpful one to determine whether an animal is well hydrated. (See dehydration.) This test can be affected by several factors other than hydration status, such as weight loss, age and general skin condition, but it can help you make a rough determination of your pet's hydration status. To perform this test, pull the skin over the chest or back into a tent and release it quickly; avoid the skin of the neck as it's often too thick for this test. Observe the skin as it returns to its resting position.



### Normal

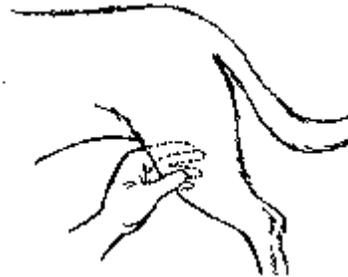
- The skin snaps back into position quickly.

### Abnormal

- The skin returns slowly or remains slightly tented. This is a sign of possible dehydration.

## Pulse and Heart Rate

Learn to locate the pulse on your pet before a crisis. The best place on a cat or dog is the femoral artery in the groin area. Place your fingers around the front of the hind leg and move upward until the back of your hand meets the abdominal wall. Move your fingertips back and forth on the inside of the thigh until you feel the pulsing sensation as the blood rushes through the artery. Count the number of pulses in 15 seconds and multiply by 4. This will give you the pulse rate in beats per minute (bpm). Pulse rate is a highly variable finding and can be affected by recent exercise, excitement or stress. Do not use the heart rate as the sole evidence that your pet is sick or healthy.



Resting heart rates listed are for healthy animals at rest at home, not for animals evaluated in a veterinary clinic where higher heart rates than those listed might be detected due to excitement, stress of a visit to the clinic, or disease.

### Normal

- Cats: 100 to 160 beats per minute (bpm). A relaxed cat may have a slower pulse.
- Dogs: 60 to 160 bpm. Relaxed or athletic dogs tend to have slower heart rates.
- Pulse is easily palpated, strong, and regular.
- Normal resting rate is 15 to 60 breaths per minute. A sleeping or resting cat would be near the low end, while an active cat would be higher.
- An increased resting respiratory rate may be a sign that a disease is progressing. If you know your cat's normal resting rate is 15 breaths a minute, and after living with heart disease the resting rate goes up to 30 while the cat is asleep, the doubled rate means it's time to see the veterinarian again.

### Abnormal

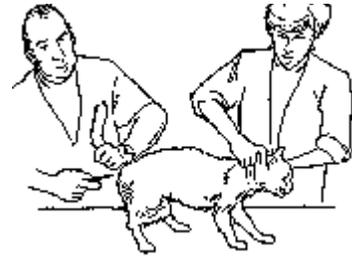
- Too rapid or too slow

- Pulse is weak, irregular, or hard to locate.

Learn how to properly take your pet's pulse.

### Temperature

Taking your pet's temperature is an easy and important procedure. Use a digital rectal thermometer. The ear ones are less reliable and a rectal one should be used. Digital thermometers are easier to read and can be inexpensively purchased at a pharmacy.



Rectal temperatures are more accurate than axillary (between the front leg and the body) temperatures. Lubricate the thermometer with petroleum jelly. Gently and slowly insert the thermometer into the rectum about 1 or 2 inches. If it does not slide in easily, do not force it. Leave it in for 2 minutes, then read and record the temperature.

#### Normal

- Temperature is between 101F and 102.5F.
- The thermometer is almost clean when removed.

#### Abnormal

- Temperature is below 100F or above 103F.
- There is evidence of blood, diarrhea, or black, tarry stool on the thermometer.

It may be easier to take your cat's temperature if you have someone to help you. Do not risk taking your pet's temperature if you feel there is a risk of being bitten.

### Normals: A Final Note

Know the normals for your pet. Record the results of your pet's home examination using the outline on the following page. Watch your pet closely so you know when something is wrong. Become familiar with these normals before a crisis so you can recognize an abnormal finding.

### Normal Values for my Pet

My pet \_\_\_\_\_ has the following normal values:

Normal Weight: \_\_\_\_\_ pounds

Resting Heart Rate (Pulse): \_\_\_\_\_ beats per minute

Resting Respiratory Rate: \_\_\_\_\_ breaths per minute

Rectal Temperature: \_\_\_\_\_ degrees Fahrenheit

Normal Gum Color: \_\_\_\_\_

Normal Whites of the Eyes: \_\_\_\_\_

*This information is intended as a general reference for the lay public, and is not intended to replace the advice of a veterinarian. A veterinarian should be consulted before starting, stopping or changing any medications.*

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## A Poison Safe Home

### Foods to Avoid Feeding Your Pet

Alcoholic beverages	Onions, onion powder
Avocado	Raisins and grapes
Chocolate (all forms)	Salt
Coffee (all forms)	Yeast dough
Fatty foods	Garlic
Macadamia nuts	Products sweetened with xylitol
Moldy or spoiled foods	

### Warm Weather Hazards

Animal toxins—toads, insects, spiders, snakes and scorpions	
Blue-green algae in ponds	Outdoor plants and plant bulbs
Citronella candles	Swimming-pool treatment supplies
Cocoa mulch	Fly baits containing methomyl
Compost piles Fertilizers	Slug and snail baits containing metaldehyde
Flea products	

### Medication

Common examples of human medications that can be potentially lethal to pets, even in small doses, include:

Pain killers	Antidepressants
Cold medicines	Vitamins
Anti-cancer drugs	Diet Pills

### Cold Weather Hazards

Antifreeze	Ice melting products
Liquid potpourri	Rat and mouse bait

### Common Household Hazards

Fabric softener sheets  
Mothballs  
Post-1982 pennies (due to high concentration of zinc)

### Holiday Hazards

Christmas tree water (may contain fertilizers and bacteria, which, if ingested, can upset the stomach.  
Electrical cords  
Ribbons or tinsel (can become lodged in the intestines and cause intestinal obstruction—most often occurs with kittens!)  
Batteries  
Glass ornaments

### Non-toxic Substances for Dogs and Cats

The following substances are considered to be non-toxic, although they may cause mild gastrointestinal upset in some animals:

Water-based paints	Cat litter
Toilet bowl water	Glue traps
Silica gel	Glow jewelry
Poinsettia	

## 17 Poisonous Plants

**Lilies** Members of the *Lilium spp.* are considered to be highly toxic to cats. While the poisonous component has not yet been identified, it is clear that with even ingestions of very small amounts of the plant, severe kidney damage could result.

**Marijuana** Ingestion of *Cannabis sativa* by companion animals can result in depression of the central nervous system and uncoordination, as well as vomiting, diarrhea, drooling, increased heart rate, and even seizures and coma.

**Sago Palm** All parts of *Cycas Revoluta* are poisonous, but the seeds or "nuts" contain the largest amount of toxin. The ingestion of just one or two seeds can result in very serious effects, which include vomiting, diarrhea, depression, seizures and liver failure.

**Tulip/Narcissus bulbs** The bulb portions of *Tulipa/Narcissus spp.* contain toxins that can cause intense gastrointestinal irritation, drooling, loss of appetite, depression of the central nervous system, convulsions and cardiac abnormalities.

**Azalea/Rhododendron** Members of the *Rhododendron spp.* contain substances known as grayantoxins, which can produce vomiting, drooling, diarrhea, weakness and depression of the central nervous system in animals. Severe azalea poisoning could ultimately lead to coma and death from cardiovascular collapse.

**Oleander** All parts of *Nerium oleander* are considered to be toxic, as they contain cardiac glycosides that have the potential to cause serious effects—including gastrointestinal tract irritation, abnormal heart function, hypothermia and even death.

**Castor Bean** The poisonous principle in *Ricinus communis* is ricin, a highly toxic protein that can produce severe abdominal pain, drooling, vomiting, diarrhea, excessive thirst, weakness and loss of appetite. Severe cases of poisoning can result in dehydration, muscle twitching, tremors, seizures, coma and death.

**Cyclamen** *Cyclamen* species contain cyclamine, but the highest concentration of this toxic component is typically located in the root portion of the plant. If consumed, *Cyclamen* can produce significant gastrointestinal irritation, including intense vomiting. Fatalities have also been reported in some cases.

**Kalanchoe** This plant contains components that can produce gastrointestinal irritation, as well as those that are toxic to the heart, and can seriously affect cardiac rhythm and rate.

**Yew** *Taxus spp.* contains a toxic component known as taxine, which causes central nervous system effects such as trembling, incoordination, and difficulty breathing. It can also cause significant gastrointestinal irritation and cardiac failure, which can result in death.

**Amaryllis** Common garden plants popular around Easter, *Amaryllis* species contain toxins that can cause vomiting, depression, diarrhea, abdominal pain, hypersalivation, anorexia and tremors.

**Autumn Crocus** Ingestion of *Colchicum autumnale* by pets can result in oral irritation, bloody vomiting, diarrhea, shock, multi-organ damage and bone marrow suppression.

**Chrysanthemum** These popular blooms are part of the *Compositae* family, which contain pyrethrins that may produce gastrointestinal upset, including drooling, vomiting and diarrhea, if eaten. In certain cases depression and loss of coordination may also develop if enough of any part of the plant is consumed.

**English Ivy** Also called branching ivy, glacier ivy, needlepoint ivy, sweetheart ivy and California ivy, *Hedera helix* contains triterpenoid saponins that, should pets ingest, can result in vomiting, abdominal pain, hypersalivation and diarrhea.

**Peace Lily (AKA Mauna Loa Peace Lily)** *Spathiphyllum* contains calcium oxalate crystals that can cause oral irritation, excessive drooling, vomiting, difficulty in swallowing and intense burning and irritation of the mouth, lips and tongue in pets who ingest.

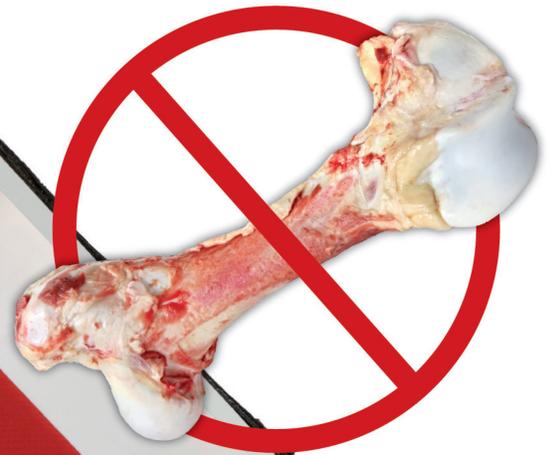
**Pothos** Pothos (both *Scindapsus* and *Epipremnum*) belongs to the Araceae family. If chewed or ingested, this popular household plant can cause significant mechanical irritation and swelling of the oral tissues and other parts of the gastrointestinal tract.

**Schefflera** *Schefflera* and *Brassaia actinophylla* contain calcium oxalate crystals that can cause oral irritation, excessive drooling, vomiting, difficulty in swallowing and intense burning and irritation of the mouth, lips and tongue in pets who ingest.

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# No Bones About It: Bones are Unsafe for Your Dog

**T**he idea that it's natural for dogs to chew on bones is a popular one. However, it's a dangerous practice and can cause serious injury to your pet.



## The Risks:

- broken teeth
- mouth injuries
- choking
- intestinal blockage
- constipation
- rectal bleeding
- infections
- death

# *“Make sure you throw out bones from your own meals in a way that your dog can’t get to them.”*

“Some people think it’s safe to give dogs large bones, like those from a ham or a roast,” says Carmela Stamper, D.V.M., a veterinarian in the Center for Veterinary Medicine at the Food and Drug Administration. “Bones are unsafe no matter what their size. Giving your dog a bone may make your pet a candidate for a trip to your veterinarian’s office later, possible emergency surgery, or even death.”

“Make sure you throw out bones from your own meals in a way that your dog can’t get to them,” adds Stamper, who suggests taking the trash out right away or putting the bones up high and out of your dog’s reach until you have a chance to dispose of them. “And pay attention to where your dog’s nose is when you walk him around the neighborhood—steer him away from any objects lying in the grass.”

Here are 10 reasons why it’s a bad idea to give your dog a bone:

**1. Broken teeth.**

This may call for expensive veterinary dentistry.

**2. Mouth or tongue injuries.**

These can be very bloody and messy and may require a trip to see your veterinarian.

**3. Bone gets looped around your dog’s lower jaw.**

This can be frightening or painful for your dog and potentially costly to you, as it usually means a trip to see your veterinarian.

**4. Bone gets stuck in esophagus, the tube that food travels through to reach the stomach.**

Your dog may gag, trying to bring the bone back up, and will need to see your veterinarian.

**5. Bone gets stuck in windpipe.**

This may happen if your dog accidentally inhales a small enough piece of bone. This is an emergency because your dog will have trouble breathing. Get your pet to your veterinarian immediately!

**6. Bone gets stuck in stomach.**

It went down just fine, but the bone may be too big to pass out of the stomach and into the intestines. Depending on the bone’s size, your dog may need surgery or upper gastrointestinal endoscopy, a procedure in which your veterinarian uses a long tube with a built-in camera and grabbing tools to try to remove the stuck bone from the stomach.

**7. Bone gets stuck in intestines and causes a blockage.**

It may be time for surgery.

**8. Constipation due to bone fragments.**

Your dog may have a hard time passing the bone fragments because they’re very sharp and they scrape the inside of the large intestine or rectum as they move along. This causes severe pain and may require a visit to your veterinarian.

**9. Severe bleeding from the rectum.**

This is very messy and can be dangerous. It’s time for a trip to see your veterinarian.

**10. Peritonitis.**

This nasty, difficult-to-treat bacterial infection of the abdomen is caused when bone fragments poke holes in your dog’s stomach or intestines. Your dog needs an emergency visit to your veterinarian because peritonitis can kill your dog.

“Talk with your veterinarian about alternatives to giving bones to your dog,” says Stamper. “There are many bone-like products made with materials that are safe for dogs to chew on.”

“Always supervise your dog with any chew product, especially one your dog hasn’t had before,” adds Stamper. “And always, if your dog ‘just isn’t acting right,’ call your veterinarian right away!” 

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