

Why do dogs eat poop and how you can get your pet to stop

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Sometimes, our dogs do strange things. Besides biting their dirty paws or rolling around in puddles, dogs occasionally drink from toilets or lick their butts.

In other cases, your pup may even eat their own poop, or worse, the poop of another dog or animal. To any pet owner, this would be considered disgusting and cause concern.

But why do [dogs](#) eat poop? Dogs eat poop for a number of reasons. Although their actions may seem gross to humans, your dog's motive for doing so may not be.

Why do dogs eat poop?

If your dog is eating poop, it could be for a number of reasons, including anxiety, attention, isolation, confinement or inappropriate association with food, according to the American Kennel Club.

Some dogs with harsh punishment trauma may eat their own poop to avoid further reprimand. Others will eat poop to get a reaction out of their owners, so it is best to not overreact.

Dogs who are often kept alone away from humans may eat poop. Likewise, dogs who are put in tight, small spaces, like overcrowded kennels, may also consume feces.

If your dog's food is nearby where they go to the bathroom, they may confuse the scent of food and feces, causing them to associate poop with consumption.

Is it normal for dogs to eat poop?

Poop eating, known scientifically as coprophagia, is not rare among dogs.

According to a 2018 study in *Veterinarian Medicine and Science*, 16% of

respondents reported their dogs to be "frequent stool eaters," meaning they were caught eating poop less than or equal to six times. However, nearly 77% of owners reported never seeing their dogs eat poop.

Some of the reasons why dogs eat poop are relatively normal. For example, nursing female dogs will eat the poop of their babies to keep an area clean, according to PetMD.

Additionally, some dogs will eat the poop of other animals, including horses, since the feces contain nutrients. But this behavior should be discouraged as there can also be harmful bacteria in the poop, according to PetMD.

Will my dog get sick from eating poop?

Poop eating can definitely be a concern to a [pet owner](#) since it can make your dog sick.

If your dog is eating its own poop, it may be OK, but there is still a chance of illness. Especially if your dog is eating the poop of another dog or animal, there is a large risk of infectious diseases or parasites.

Some symptoms of poop eating include gastroenteritis, vomiting and diarrhea, decreased appetite, tiredness and [intestinal parasites](#), according to Muenster Milling.

Consult your veterinarian if your dog has eaten poop and is experiencing any [behavioral changes](#) or symptoms.

How can I keep my dog from eating poop?

To curb your pup from eating poop, you may consider vitamin or

enzyme supplements. These can help if your dog is eating poop due to a lack of certain nutrients, such as vitamin B, says the AKC.

There are also various deterrents on the market, which make poop less appetizing to your dog.

Other methods to stop your dog from eating poop include training, using commands like 'leave it,' keeping a close eye during walks and cleaning up poop immediately.

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