

Efficacy of diet, antibiotics or probiotics for the treatment of canine acute gastroenteritis

Purpose of study

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effects of diet in treating acute canine gastroenteritis as compared to antibiotics or probiotics, with the belief that diet will be just as effective in alleviating gastroenteritis upset.

Inclusion criteria

- Dogs of any breed, gender, or weight older than 1 year
- Presenting symptoms of acute diarrhea but otherwise healthy
- No evidence of systemic illness, including fever or refusal to eat
- No history of pancreatitis, inflammatory bowel disease, or endocrinopathy
- No suspicion of hemorrhagic gastroenteritis
- A fecal score of 2.5 or lower on the Royal Canine 5-point scoring system

Study procedure

The study will last 5 days. As a part of this study, one visit to UTCVM is required for the patient. Upon the initial visit, the patient will have a fecal sample tested for parasites at no charge to the owner. Moreover, a fecal score will be determined at the start of the study and have continued scoring for the remainder of the study. Finally, patients will be randomly placed into one of four groups: the antibiotics group, the probiotics group, the diet group, and the placebo group. Owners will be required to complete a questionnaire to collect fecal scores during the 5-day period. The owner will also need to monitor their dog's condition at home.

Study benefits

- Initial visit: complimentary office visit, physical exam, and fecal analysis
- If eligible to participate, the patient will receive a 5-day supply of either dry food, antibiotic, probiotic, or placebo based on the patient's randomly assigned group. Dogs in the placebo group will receive no additional treatment.

Costs to client

There is no cost to client during the 5-day study or the one-time, initial visit.

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