



Chronic Vomiting in Dogs

micro drip study guide

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Definition

Chronic is ≥ 2 weeks

Differentiating acute vs. chronic is challenging due to intermittent nature

Differentiate from post-tussive retching

Vomiting usually associated with prodromal signs

- Depression, ptialism, frequent swallowing, vocalization

What do we mean when we say chronic? Well, again, it just means that it's been going on for at least two weeks or more. And we do have patients who vomit daily, chronically, but we also have patients that vomit every couple of days, or once a week. And so differentiating acute vomiting when it only happens once a week or once every 10 days can be really challenging to define or differentiate that as acute versus chronic because of that intermittent nature of that patient's vomiting.

We also need to make sure that the vomiting isn't actually representative of what we call a post-tussive retch, meaning that dog is actually coughing, but they cough so much or so hard that that end cough results in a retch. It can often bring up phlegm or bile.

So think of an uncontrolled chronic bronchitis patient, or think of an uncontrolled patient with eosinophilic bronconeumopathy or eosinophilic lung disease. They cough and they cough and they cough, and sometimes they do so much coughing that the last thing they do is actually retch and bring something up. A lot of owners will interpret that as vomiting, and they'll report it to you as vomiting. And if we don't ask differentiating questions, we may go down the wrong diagnostic path and waste our time and waste our finances.

Dogs often will demonstrate some prodromal signs, meaning as I like to say, it's the praying to the porcelain God moment for the dog. Cats do this a little bit more vocally, but if we're in tune to our patient and we can teach owners to be in tune with their dog if they're not already, we can often identify some prodromal signs that tell us, oh yeah, that vomiting is about to rear its ugly head.