



Parvoviral Enteritis

Diagnostic Plan

History
Physical examination
Stool analysis
Blood tests
Urinalysis
Abdominal x-rays
Upper G.I. series
Endoscopy with tissue biopsy

Therapeutic Plan

Nothing by mouth
Fluid therapy
Intestinal protectants
Antibacterials

Nutritional Plan

A highly digestible diet
Consider overall patient condition when determining the protein level and caloric density of the food

Parvoviral Enteritis

Your pet has parvoviral enteritis. Parvoviral enteritis is a severe, sometimes fatal infection of the intestinal tract in dogs and cats. Common clinical signs include vomiting, diarrhea, appetite loss, dehydration, and depression. Treatment includes supportive and nursing care until the infection runs its course. This client education sheet will help you learn more about parvoviral enteritis and will review your veterinarian's instructions for your pet's care at home, as well as follow-up with the veterinary health care team.

What You Should Know About Parvoviral Enteritis

Parvoviruses affect tissues whose cells are continuously dividing to replace older cells. These viruses have an affinity for the cells lining the intestine and for the cells in the bone marrow that form white blood cells.

Feline parvoviral enteritis (panleukopenia) can occur in cats and dogs, but is most severe in puppies. Both diseases are highly contagious.

Causes

This intestinal infection is caused by separate parvoviruses in dogs and cats. Other viruses and bacteria may complicate and worsen the disease.

Diagnosis

The history you provide, such as possible exposure to sick animals, will be very helpful to your veterinarian. Blood samples often show decreased white blood cell levels because the virus affects the bone marrow. Other diagnostic tests such as x-rays help rule out other causes of vomiting and diarrhea.

Treatment and Home Care

There are no treatments that will rid your pet's body of the virus. Therapy, therefore, is designed to treat the complications of the disease while the virus runs its course.

Vomiting and diarrhea cause severe dehydration. Fluid therapy to correct dehydration and electrolyte and acid-base imbalances is critical for recovery. Whole blood may be given to increase the white blood cell count and supply antibodies against the parvovirus. Antibiotics help control secondary bacterial infections. Your veterinarian may also use medications to control vomiting and slow the movement of the digestive tract. Hospitalization for several days may be necessary to allow your veterinarian to provide good nursing care until the intestine begins to heal. During this time, your veterinarian will use fluid therapy and injectable nutrients to meet your pet's needs.

Home care consists of giving all prescribed medications and carefully following your veterinarian's instructions for dietary management.

Parvoviral infections can be prevented by routine vaccinations. If your pet has not been vaccinated against canine or feline parvoviral infection, you should discuss yearly vaccinations with your veterinarian.

Nutritional Dietary Plan

If your pet has had a parvoviral infection, your veterinarian may give you special feeding instructions. Patients that have parvoviral enteritis may benefit from foods that are highly digestible during the recovery process. Such foods minimize the need for complex digestive processes and are less irritating to the intestinal tract. Foods with these nutritional characteristics include Hill's® Prescription Diet® Canine i/d® and Feline i/d®.

After your pet's recovery is complete, your veterinarian may suggest another dietary change. Nutrition is especially important to maximize growth and for proper development of the immune, or protective, system in younger pets, such as those that present with parvoviral enteritis. Optimal nutrition should also reduce the health risks associated with feeding excess levels of nutrients such as calcium and phosphorus, which could cause skeletal problems, and excess calories, which could cause obesity. Foods formulated for maximum growth that avoid excess levels of harmful nutrients include Hill's® Science Diet® Puppy and Kitten for growing pets and Hill's® Science Diet® Adult for dogs and cats one to six years of age.

Transitioning Food

Unless recommended otherwise by your veterinarian, gradually introduce any new food over a seven-day period. Mix the new food with your pet's former food, gradually increasing its proportion until only the new food is fed.

If your pet is one of the few that doesn't readily accept a new food, try warming the canned food to body temperature, hand feeding for the first few days, or mixing the dry food with warm water (wait ten minutes before serving). However, do not add water to your cat's food. Feed only the prescribed diet. Do not feed additional salt or any snacks that may contain sodium. Be patient but firm with your pet. This is important because the success or failure of treatment depends to a large degree on strict adherence to the new food.

Presented as an educational service by



Home Care Instructions

Client's Name: _____

Patient's Name: _____

Medication(s): _____

Nutritional Recommendation: _____

Follow-Up Appointment: _____

(Hospital Stamp Area Above)

REGULAR VISITS WILL HELP OUR VETERINARY HEALTH CARE TEAM PROVIDE FOR YOUR PET'S BEST INTEREST.