

House Soiling

House soiling is when a dog defecates or urinates inside the home. There are many different reasons a dog may eliminate inside the home and it's crucial to determine the cause(s) so we can come up with a treatment plan to fix the problem.

Some reasons a dog may house soil are:

- Medical problem(s)
- Lack of house training
- Behavioural problem(s)

Medical problems

If you find that your house-trained dog is all of sudden eliminating in the house, there could be an underlying medical condition. Please book an appointment with your veterinarian as your first step.

Lack of house training

When you get a puppy or adopt an older dog and find that they are house soiling constantly or periodically, they may not be properly house trained. This can be easily fixed by attentively following the tips below.

Tips to help with house training:

- Set a routine by taking your dog out as soon as you wake up and before you go to bed.
- Take them out after meals and frequently throughout the day.
- Keep your eye on their body language: are they standing by the door whining or circling in one area? These can be signs that your dog has to go to the bathroom.
- When your dog eliminates in an appropriate area (outside), praise them immediately and reward with lots of yummy treats.
- If your dog eliminates inside, make sure that you clean it up immediately and clean the area to get rid of any smell, as dogs tend to go back to the same area to eliminate again. If you have rugs inside the home and your dog house soils on them, remove the rugs altogether until you get the house training under control.
- Supervision is key. If you are unable to supervise your dog, keep them in a confined area or crate.
- If your dog has an accident inside, **do not** scold or punish. It is an ineffective way to house train dogs as they simply learn to be afraid of you, which will lead to them hide and eliminate in areas where you are unable to see them.



Behaviour problems

Once a medical problem is ruled out, we can look to see if there is a behaviour problem and determine what is causing this elimination in the home. Some behaviour problems resulting in house soiling are:

Separation type anxiety

Some dogs that display anxious behaviour when left alone may house soil, so setting them up in a confined area with a long-lasting treat before you leave would be best. If the separation type anxiety is more serious, it would be best to contact your veterinarian and work with a certified trainer to assist with this behaviour problem.

Excitement elimination

It is most common in puppies and usually dissipates when they get older. It tends to occur during greetings or playing with another dog and their excitement level is high. To help with this problem, keep greetings low key and do not punish.

Submissive urination

It occurs when a dog perceives something in their presence that may be intimidating to them. By avoiding situations that your dog finds threatening and making greetings and introductions calm, you can help prevent your dog's submissive urination.

Marking

This is when dogs urinate on objects that are upright. It is mostly seen in unneutered males, but can occur in spayed females and neutered males. To help eliminate this problem, do not give your dog opportunities to mark in the house by restricting their movements or removing items that they have marked on before. You will also want to clean areas thoroughly to prevent your dog from going back to that spot.

