



## Guide Dogs for the Blind

800.295.4050 | guidedogs.com

**Please give this handout to the puppy's local veterinarian if your visit is due to diarrhea**

### Diarrhea Recommendations for Puppies 8 weeks to 8 months old

**Thank you for caring for this special puppy! We want to share GDB's approach for diarrhea in puppies that are BARH with a normal appetite.**

Most of the diarrhea in GDB puppies is due to immaturity of the intestinal tract and/or difficulty digesting their diet (food-responsive diarrhea). Only a small percentage is caused by an infection or parasite (see note about Giardia and Coccidia on the back of this page). Hence, our focus is on finding a diet and fiber plan to support the stools. The vast majority of our puppies that experience diarrhea will have normal stools on a regular OTC diet once they are over 6 months of age. Historically, antibiotics have frequently been used to treat puppy diarrhea but given the negative impact antibiotics can have on the puppies' microbiome, GDB recommends trying at least 2 veterinary gastrointestinal diets, psyllium, and probiotics before treating with antibiotics. We have found if diarrhea persists after a prescription gastrointestinal diet has been tried, that feeding the hydrolyzed diet Royal Canin HP Puppy typically resolves the diarrhea and prevents the need for antibiotics in most cases.

**GDB entrusts local veterinarians to adjust the following plan as needed.**

The plan below is **NOT** intended for a puppy that is lethargic, painful, not eating/drinking, vomiting repeatedly, has marked hematochezia, or has a history of dietary indiscretion.

If a puppy has **TWO** or more #6 or #7 stools (Purina Fecal Score) **(Diarrhea Day #1):**

- Feed Purina EN (diet provided to raiser in the GDB Diarrhea Kit)
- Give psyllium
  - Puppies under 30lb - ½ tsp to moistened food twice daily
  - Puppies over 30lb - 1 tsp to moistened food twice daily
- Give one of the following probiotics if available: Fortiflora, Provable, or Visbiome
- If diarrhea continues after 2-3 days, increase psyllium by ½ tsp twice daily

If NO improvement after 5 days **(Diarrhea Day #5):**

- Drop off a fecal sample for a fecal float with centrifugation and Giardia ELISA
- Schedule a veterinary exam.
- Bloodwork is typically not pursued unless the puppy is lethargic, vomiting, or has other symptoms beyond diarrhea.
- If puppy is healthy but not improving on Purina EN, start Royal Canin HP Puppy (22lb bag)
  - UC Davis Veterinary Nutrition Department has given us approval for off label use in our puppies under 6 months. The approved protocol is to feed it exclusively for 2 months followed by a 2-week transition to an OTC diet.
- Continue psyllium until stools have been normal for one week, then discontinue.

If Royal Canin HP Puppy resolves the diarrhea, feed a 22lb bag of Royal Canin HP Puppy until ¼ of the bag remains, then do a 10-14 day transition to an over-the-counter GDB approved puppy diet.

If NO improvement after 5 days of feeding only Royal Canin HP Puppy with psyllium:

- GDB continues HP Puppy, psyllium, and considers treatment with tylosin (*dose info on back*)

- GDB prefers tylosin to metronidazole, because it may have less of an impact on the puppy's microbiome, and since tylosin is not used in human medicine.
- If tylosin is not available, a course of metronidazole is supported by GDB.
- A diarrhea PCR test is not necessary, unless the results will likely alter the treatment plan.
- Fecal transplant treatment (if available at the local vet) can be given prior to trying antibiotics

If a treating veterinarian wishes to consult with a GDB veterinarian, one can be reached via:

- GDB VFA (Veterinary Financial Assistance) at 800-295-4050, option 2, then option 2  
Or Email: [vetsupport@guidedogs.com](mailto:vetsupport@guidedogs.com)

### **GDB's recommendations for feeding a GI diet (adjust as needed):**

Feed roughly the same number of calories given with the regular diet and monitor the BCS.

*Below is a general guide, however pet food formulations and calorie amounts can change.*

Every 1 cup of Purina Pro Plan Puppy Large Breed Chicken & Rice (419 kcal per cup) equals:

- 1 cup of Purina EN (397 kcal per cup)
- 1 cup of Royal Canin Gastrointestinal Puppy (428 kcal per cup)
- 1.25 cups of Hill's i/d (337 kcal per cup)
- 1 cup of Royal Canin HP Puppy (375 kcal per cup)

Homecooked diet option, each cup = ¼ cup boiled chicken breast (or ¼ cup low fat cottage cheese) + ¾ cup cooked white rice

- Feed 4 cups total per day for a maximum of 3-5 days if awaiting arrival of a new diet.

### **GDB's recommendations when diarrhea has resolved (adjust as needed):**

**Diet:** Continue feeding the prescription diet until stools are normal for 2-4 weeks. When ¼ of the bag of prescription food remains, begin a 7-12 day transition to an over-the-counter GDB approved puppy diet.

- If diarrhea returns during the transition, resume feeding 100% of the prescription diet. Advise the puppy raiser to contact GDB. GDB may recommend feeding the prescription diet for an additional 1-3 months.

**Psyllium:** GDB generally recommends continuing the psyllium while transitioning to a regular puppy diet, then tapering the psyllium over one week. If a puppy will be on a special diet for an extended period, we recommend tapering off the psyllium after stools have been normal for at least one week.

**Probiotics:** GDB supplies raisers with 10 days of Fortiflora and recommends discontinuing if the diarrhea worsens or does not improve after 1 week of the probiotic.

**Tylosin dose:** GDB generally prescribes tylosin at 5 – 20 mg/kg once daily for 7 – 10 days.

Tylosin tartrate powder contains approximately 2.6 grams per level teaspoonful in 100 gram bottles

1/8th tsp of Tylan = 325 mg of tylosin

Puppies less than 30lbs: 1/16th tsp once daily for 7-10 days

Puppies 30lbs or more: 1/8th tsp once daily for 7-10 days

### **Coccidia**

In our puppies, coccidia sometimes causes hives/facial swelling. These symptoms can be seen with or without diarrhea or vomiting. Hence, we request that any GDB dog seen for hives and/or facial swelling receive a fecal float with centrifugation. GDB treats coccidia with either Albon (Sulfadimethoxine) or Ponazuril.

### **Giardia**

GDB generally treats Giardia with a 5-day course of Panacur (fenbendazole) and feeds a commercial GI diet (Purina EN, Royal Canin Gastrointestinal Puppy, or Hill's i/d) until the stools have been normal for at least a week.