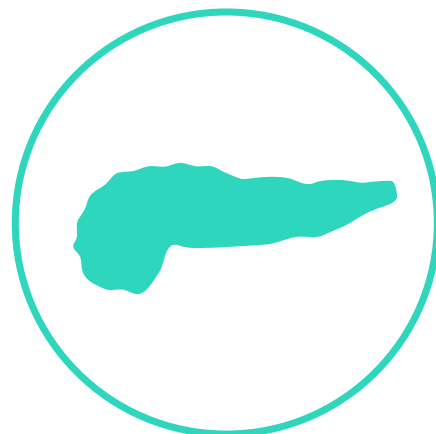


**Pancreatic Disorders**

CHRONIC PANCREATITIS IN DOGS



Although chronic pancreatitis was once thought to be uncommon in dogs, studies during the past 15 years have confirmed that it is a common and clinically significant canine condition.¹

Chronic pancreatitis is defined as an ongoing inflammatory disease characterized by irreversible structural changes that can cause refractory pain; progressive, permanent loss of exocrine and endocrine function; and reduced quality of life.^{2,3} Dogs with chronic pancreatitis may present initially with a clinically severe, apparently acute episode of pancreatitis after a subclinical phase of low-grade inflammation has destroyed pancreatic tissue.⁴ Chronic pancreatitis may be an incidental finding in some cases.⁵

Common clinical signs exhibited by dogs with chronic pancreatitis are lethargy and intermittent anorexia with or without vomiting or diarrhea.^{1,4,5} Physical exam findings can include abdominal pain, elevated body temperature, dehydration, and jaundice.^{5,6}

Dietary modification may play an important role in the successful long-term management of dogs with chronic pancreatitis.^{1,6}

Key Messages

- Nutritional support plays an important therapeutic role in the management of dogs with acute, acute-on-chronic, and chronic pancreatitis, but it can be challenging.⁸⁻¹¹
- An acute exacerbation of chronic pancreatitis, which appears clinically indistinguishable from a single episode of acute pancreatitis, should be treated symptomatically as acute pancreatitis.
 - See Acute Pancreatitis in Dogs for specific recommendations.

(continued on next page)

DID YOU KNOW?

Studies in both humans and dogs show that up to 40% of acute pancreatitis cases are actually acute-on-chronic pancreatitis when histopathology is performed.⁷

Key Messages (continued)

- Lifelong dietary fat reduction is a logical consideration in the nutritional management of all dogs with chronic pancreatitis, regardless of the presence of hyperlipidemia,⁶ although the link between high dietary fat and naturally occurring pancreatitis is not clear.⁸
 - Many dogs with pancreatitis are hyperlipidemic, which can be managed with dietary fat reduction.⁹
 - The amount of dietary fat tolerated is likely patient specific. A diet considerably lower in fat content than the dog's previous diet is indicated after chronic pancreatitis diagnosis.
 - A fat-free diet is not appropriate because dietary fat provides essential fatty acids (i.e., linoleic acid) and is necessary for proper absorption of fat-soluble vitamins (i.e., A, D, E, and K).
 - Fatty table foods and treats should be avoided.
- While studies evaluating different diet types and their effects on the course of canine chronic pancreatitis are lacking, a highly digestible diet designed for patients with gastrointestinal disease is commonly recommended.
 - Dogs with hypertriglyceridemia can be fed a high-quality, balanced, ultra-low-fat diet (fat content \leq 10% DM or 2 to 3 grams per 100 kilocalories of metabolizable energy [g/100 kcal ME]) to achieve lower serum triglycerides and cholesterol.^{8,12}
 - Non-hypertriglyceridemic dogs recovering from pancreatitis can be fed low-fat foods (\leq 15% DM or $<$ 3.5 g/100 kcal ME).^{12,13} However, if there is no evidence of fat intolerance, an easily digested diet with moderate fat content (4 to 6 g/100 kcal ME) can be fed.⁸

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