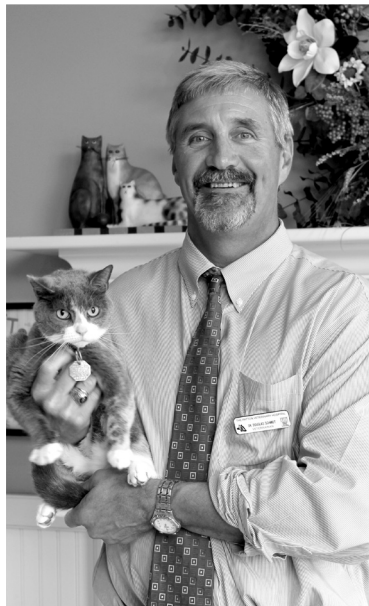


ASK OUR VET, DR. SCHMIDT



Why does my dog eat his own feces?

Oh, the age old question “Why does my dog eat his own feces?” As one veterinarian put it, this fits in the category “if-I-knew-the-answer-to-this-question-I’d-be-a-millionaire”!

Some suspected reasons for this are an exploratory behavior, to establish intestinal bacterial flora and to compensate for a nutritional deficiency. However, a large percentage of the time it is likely a behavioral problem. Sometimes this is a normal behavior in dogs, such as when the mother eats her puppy’s feces. Or in other species such as rabbits, it is part of the normal digestion process. Puppies are the most likely culprits of this annoying behavior and most times they grow out of this behavior. Occasionally though it becomes a hard to break habit.

Since there is the possibility of an underlying health problem, it is important you have your dog evaluated by a veterinarian for a physical exam. Blood work and fecal testing may be recommended to ensure your pet’s health. If it is determined

your dog is healthy, there are supplements we can add to the food to make it taste bad (yes, we can make feces taste worse!). Sometimes switching to a different brand of dog food may help or a prescription allergy diet is needed. Ultimately the best way to stop them from eating their feces is to clean up after your dog immediately. For those dogs that are really hard to stop, a behavioral specialist may need to be consulted.



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