



May 2025



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

As some of you know, my Orlaith passed away on the 8th of April. She was diagnosed with congestive heart failure that morning about 8 am and a minor procedure was done to reduce the fluid around her heart. They used a tiny amount of anesthesia per the anesthesia protocol. She came home took a nap and was doing great. She ate a small amount of food at 3 pm and tolerated it well. Around 7 – 7:30 pm I took her outside. She went potty and laid down to people watch. Ten minutes later she was up/down laying in new spots, she was checking in with me. Then the pacing and trying to vomit, unsuccessfully, began. She kept hiding in the scrub brush in the yard, getting tangled in vines. I checked her belly while I was untangling her—rock hard. I knew it was bloat in that moment. I ran to get my husband to help get her into the car, called the vet for the best ER (they called them to let them know we were coming), got the leash and headed back out to get Orlaith hooked up and remoted the

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER continued

car open. Orlaith was nowhere to be found. She was back in the vines, it was pitch dark, and I am trying to untangle her as fast as I could. As many of you know, time is of the essence with bloat. The ER vets were waiting at the doors with a gurney when we arrived. They gave her pain meds while they checked her out. They had the paperwork from the morning vet and had already read it. After looking at new x-rays, they were unable to do the bloat surgery because of the small amount of anesthesia she had that morning and with having the surgery there was a 97% chance she would have a heart attack on the table and die, at a cost of \$15,000. Without the surgery, she would die, at a cost of ~\$1,500. Either way, my girl was not coming home. We were with her until the end, offering her what comfort we could. I miss my girl so much. She was my constant companion and now she is running on the other side of the rainbow bridge with her friends--Tyr, Bonnie, and Sheridan. **Orlaith aka Gladstone's Faerie Kiss on Broadway, 13 Apr 2019 – 8 Apr 2025. Go dtí go mbuailfimid le chéile arís, mo chailín álainn. Is breá liom tú, chailín beag. I gcónaí.**

Preparing Your Dog for Spring

By Harriet Meyers, Updated: Mar 26, 2025 **AKC**

When the flowers start to bloom and spring fever strikes, you'll want to make sure you and your dog are ready. Luckily, there are steps you can take to ensure that this lovely season is an enjoyable and safe one.

Spring Health Preventatives for Dogs

Spring checkups are a great time to check to see if your dog's weight changed over the winter months. Be sure to discuss any medical or behavioral changes you've noticed in your dog with your veterinarian. Knowing your dog has a clean bill of health can allow you and your dog to better enjoy any outdoor activities.

Heartworm in Dogs

Heartworm is a threat to dogs when mosquitoes breed in warm weather. When infected mosquitoes bite, the worms embed into the dog, eventually damaging the dog's heart, lungs, and arteries. To prevent heartworm, veterinarians recommend having your dog tested annually and dosing them with a heartworm prevention medication year-round.

Dog Flea and Tick Prevention

Fleas and ticks are also more prevalent when outdoor temperatures rise. Fleas are irritating to a dog's skin and difficult to get rid of. Certain types of ticks can carry dangerous conditions, such as Lyme disease and Rocky Mountain spotted fever. To protect your pet, ask your veterinarian for preventatives such as a prescription pill, topical ointment, or a flea collar. Be sure to check your dog when coming back from wooded or grassy areas, too.



RichLegg via Getty Images

Spring Allergies in Dogs

Spring allergies sometimes cause uncomfortable reactions to pollen in dogs, as well as humans. However, instead of a runny nose, dogs typically get very itchy, especially on their feet, front legs, ears, and face, causing them to scratch, lick, or bite. While some breeds are more susceptible, any dog can suffer from allergies. Allergy shots, special shampoos, washing their bedding, and wiping off their feet and legs after they're outside may help relieve these reactions.

Bee Stings in Dogs

Bee sting allergies are rare in dogs, but they're serious and potentially deadly. If your dog is allergic to bee stings or has a history of anaphylaxis, your veterinarian may prescribe an EpiPen, and you'll need to keep it readily available when your dog is outdoors.

Spring Home Care for Dogs

As the weather warms up, it's important to make a few adjustments to ensure your dog can be comfortable and safe at home.

Spring Grooming for Dogs

Spring grooming for dogs comes to mind when temperatures rise and shedding increases. Brushing your dog can remove dead hairs. Shaving the coat of double-coated breeds, such as Labrador Retrievers and Australian Shepherds, however, is a bad idea. Losing the protection of their coat can make dogs hotter. Leave at least one inch of hair to protect your dog from sunburn, skin cancer, and bug bites.



Agnes Scholiers / Alamy Stock Photo

Keeping Your Dog Inside

Screens on windows and doors keep insects outside and your dog inside. Dogs love to look out the window and may not hesitate to jump out to chase a squirrel, even from a second floor. Check your screens to make sure they're strong and secure.

Keeping Your Home Cool

Cooling down your home is important for your comfort and critical to your dog. Air conditioning and fans are great, but it's also important to be prepared in case you lose power. Cooling cloths, pads, and vests can help keep your dog's body temperature regulated. Rubbing alcohol and spray bottles of water will also cool down your dog.

Outdoor Protection for Dogs

While it's fun to spend time outside with your dog, warm weather and certain outdoor activities come with some risks. Here's some precautions you can take while enjoying the outdoors.

Garden Hazards for Dogs

Garden hazards become an issue when the weather is nice, and your dog will spend more time in your yard. You'll need to ensure that your yard is secure, and check if your plants, fertilizers, and mulch are poisonous to dogs. Be sure to review which plants are poisonous to dogs before purchasing any new bulbs or plants for your yard. It's also a good idea to clean up the ground under bird feeders because dogs can develop gastritis from eating moldy seeds or bird droppings.



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Sunscreen for Dogs

Sunscreen can help protect dogs who are susceptible to sunburn. If your dog has a thin or white coat or is a hairless breed, you need to provide your dog with plenty of shade and apply only a sunscreen made especially for dogs or babies.

Heatstroke in Dogs

Heatstroke becomes a bigger threat as your dog spends more time outside. Be sure to keep plenty of fresh water available, and, as the temperature rises, monitor your dog's exercise routine. While they might be delighted to spend all day retrieving a tennis ball, be sure to keep track of when it's time to call it quits. Never leave a dog unattended in a car with closed windows any time temperatures are greater than 60 degrees Fahrenheit.

Outdoor Events with Dogs

Barbeques and backyard parties are occasions for tasty food and fun, but they can also come with some hazards for dogs. Make sure your yard is secure when you and your guests are coming and going, keep your dog away from hot grills and fire, and remember that some foods and drinks, such as grilled hot dogs, chicken bones, corn cobs, ice cream, or beer, can upset your dog's stomach and may even be toxic.



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Spring Outings with Your Dog

Whether your seasonal plans include hiking, road-tripping, or just a day at the park, a little preparation goes a long way in keeping your dog safe and happy during outings.

First Aid for Dogs

Planning and packing for emergencies will help keep your dog safe when you travel. Up-to-date microchip information and collar tags allow someone to contact you if you and your dog are separated. A first-aid kit for your dog is essential in emergencies.

Importance of Car Safety

Never leave your dog alone in your vehicle. Although the weather may seem pleasant to you, a car will heat up quickly, even with the windows cracked open. Many states have laws that prevent people from leaving dogs unattended in vehicles.



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Refresh Obedience Training

Reinforce your dog's obedience training before you head into the woods. With distractions like rabbits and other wildlife, your dog may be tempted to run off. Teach your dog to come when called, even when they'd like to ignore you.

Grass-Awn Disease in Dogs

Grass-awn disease can occur after a dog runs through a field containing foxtails or other barbed grasses. Foxtails enter a dog through the toes, ears, eyes, mouth, or nose. They're painful, cause swelling, and can travel into the lungs and result in pneumonia. The best prevention is to keep your dog away from areas with foxtails or fields of tall grasses.

Water Safety for Dogs

Not all dogs are natural swimmers, and keeping your dog safe around water is essential. Whether you're heading to the pool, the beach, or a lake, here's some safety tips to keep in mind.

Dog Pool Safety

Pool safety is important. Dogs should never have access to a swimming pool when you're not there to watch them. Consider fencing your pool to avoid your dog accessing it when you're not around. Teach your dog where to enter and exit a pool. Don't allow your dog to swim while wearing a dangling tag that can get caught in a drain. Purchase a life jacket for your dog, especially if you take them boating or swimming in open water.



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Going to the Beach with Your Dog

Beach trips can be fun outings for you and your dog, but make sure to protect them from swallowing lots of salt water, sand, or seaweed. Keep them in the shade and apply sunscreen specifically formulated for dogs. Prevent your dog from eating sand and remember that hot sand can hurt your dog's paws. If temperatures soar, leave your dog home.

Blue-Green Algae and Dogs

Blue-green algae, potentially deadly to dogs, is found in some lakes and ponds during warm-weather seasons. Keep your dog on a leash around bodies of water, don't allow them to drink from a pond or lake, and look out for signs posted that warn of algae.

Is Your Dog in Pain? Signs and Symptoms of Pain

By Stephanie Gibeault, MSc, CPDT, Updated: Feb 26, 2024 **AKC**

Having lived around humans for thousands of years, dogs are masters at reading our emotions and body language. But we don't always return the

favor, especially when it comes to noticing that our dogs are in pain. And make no mistake, dogs do feel pain. They just don't always show it the way we do. Pain and discomfort can severely impact your dog's quality of life, so it's important to learn how to read the signs and intervene when your dog is suffering.

Do Some Dogs Feel Pain More Than Others?

Some dogs are incredibly stoic while others might whimper and whine at the first sign of the nail trimmer. It all depends on their personality. And maybe their breed. Research on pain tolerance between breeds showed that there are differences, at least as far as the perception of veterinarians and the public goes. For instance, Labrador Retrievers, Mastiffs, and American Staffordshire Terriers were rated to have very low sensitivity to pain while Whippets, Maltese, and Chihuahuas were considered to have high sensitivity. Although there isn't yet any physiological basis for these perceived differences, it makes sense as different breeds were developed for different purposes. For example, a Mastiff with high pain sensitivity wouldn't have been terribly effective as a big-game hunter or war dog, two jobs they were historically used for.



©Mary Bloom

How to Know If Your Dog Is in Pain

Whether your dog is stoic or gives Broadway-worthy dramatics, how can you be sure when they're experiencing pain? You might expect your dog to solicit help from you when they aren't feeling well. After all, they have no problem asking for a walk or treat. As useful as that would be, it just doesn't work like that. Most dogs downplay their pain. After all, it makes a

wild animal vulnerable to aggression or predation if they show signs of weakness, and dogs have inherited that instinct. You need to watch for subtle signals, which means truly knowing your dog's baseline behavior and activity levels. The signs of pain might be physical, behavioral, or a combination, so be alert to anything out of the ordinary.

Physical Signs of Pain in Dogs



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Physical signs of pain in dogs can be obvious, like limping, or more subtle, like simply not going as far as usual on your daily walks. Some of the physical signs your dog is in pain include:

- Mobility issues. Your dog might limp, walk slower than normal, or even refuse to walk at all. Or they might become reluctant to use the stairs or jump on and off furniture or into and out of the car.
- Difficulty changing position. It might hurt your dog to lie down or get up again. You might notice them frequently shifting positions as they try to get comfortable.
- Shaking or trembling.
- Abnormal posture. Your dog might have a hard time standing or sitting in their usual way. For example, they might hold their head low, arch their back, or shift their weight forward or back to take pressure off sore joints.
- Panting excessively, even when resting.
- Changes in facial expression. Your dog's face might look less relaxed, or they might grimace or have a blank expression. Your dog also

might look drowsy with half-closed eyes which can be from the pain interfering with your dog's ability to sleep.

- Decreased appetite. Your dog might eat and drink less or even go off their food.

Behavioral Signs of Pain in Dogs

Just as with people, pain can make dogs cranky, so watch for changes in your dog's behavior. Learn to read your dog's body language, so you can spot signs of stress associated with pain. For example, your dog might pull back their ears or look away when you try to pet a painful area. Or they might tuck their tail, lick their lips, or yawn when you pull out the leash. All of which indicate your dog feels anxious about the experience. Other behaviors to watch for include:

- Lowered energy levels. Your dog might not want to play or exercise for as long as they used to.
- Restless behavior or pacing. This can be because your dog can't settle comfortably.
- Changes in sleep. Your dog may be unable to sleep as long as usual due to discomfort, or they might sleep even more to escape the pain.
- Lack of interest in toys or games.
- Disinterest in physical contact. Your dog might flinch when you reach out to touch them or hide at grooming time.
- Licking or biting themselves. Dogs can become fixated on painful body parts and may lick or chew them until they have created a bare patch in their fur or injured their skin.
- Depression or anxiety. Your dog might withdraw from activities they used to enjoy or seem quieter than usual.

- Housetraining accidents. If your dog finds it painful to get up or walk, they might avoid going outside for the bathroom. Holding it like this can lead to accidents in the house.
- Aggression. Any new sign of aggression could be a result of pain. Discomfort can lead to irritability making it harder for your dog to put up with handling, brushing, petting, etc.
- Seeking more attention than usual. Your dog might solicit affection as it provides comfort from the pain and stress of the situation.



JoeChristensen/E+

Vocalizations Dogs Make When They're in Pain

Dogs also communicate pain with vocalizations. Watch for groaning or grunting when your dog moves, particularly when lying down or getting up. They might also yelp when you touch a tender spot on their body. Whining and whimpering are sounds of distress. You might also hear your dog howling more than usual. And finally, watch for growling when people or other pets approach your dog. That could be your dog's way of preventing any interactions they anticipate might be painful.

What to Do If Your Dog Is in Pain

When you see signs of pain in your dog, the first thing to determine is whether the situation is critical. This is usually obvious as the signs are more severe or seem to come out of the blue. Pain with sudden onset, also known as acute pain, can result from injury, like a broken bone or strained muscle, or illness, like an ear infection. Don't take a wait and see approach. Your dog is suffering, and the situation could be more serious than it looks.

Part of being a responsible dog owner is taking your pet to an emergency veterinary clinic as soon as possible so treatment and pain relief can begin.

Chronic pain in dogs is pain that has been going on for a while. It might look more subtle and sneak up on you. For example, you might only realize your dog has been sleeping more than usual after a few weeks go by.

Illnesses like arthritis, periodontal disease, or cancer can cause this type of pain. It's also common in senior dogs, but don't just dismiss it as normal aging – it isn't. Again, your dog needs a trip to the veterinarian, but in this case, you likely don't need the emergency clinic. However, when you book the appointment, be sure to explain the signs your dog has been exhibiting, so the clinic can determine how quickly your dog needs to be seen.



Alexander Rathes via Getty Images

There are ways you can help your vet diagnose the source of your dog's pain. First, keep a detailed record of what you've noticed. For example, does your dog avoid stairs all the time or only after getting up from a nap? Or how long have they been picking at their food? Second, try to photograph or videotape the behavior of concern. Dogs often behave differently at the clinic than they do at home, so providing the vet with details will help them understand how your dog is feeling.

While you wait for your vet appointment, modify or stop any activities that seem to trigger pain. For example, if your dog doesn't want to go for a walk, simply take them out for bathroom breaks. Or provide a ramp or stairs to help them in and out of the car. But don't give your dog any medications without prior instruction from a veterinarian as many human drugs are dangerous for dogs. Once your vet has zeroed in on the

problem, they will discuss treatment options with you which could range from laser therapy to acupuncture to dietary supplements. The important thing is to identify signs of pain promptly because the sooner your dog's pain is managed and treated, the better their quality of life will be.

Heart Disease in Dogs: Signs, Symptoms, Treatments

By Caroline Coile, PhD, Updated: Sep 26, 2024 **AKC**

More than 10% of dogs will develop heart disease in their lifetime. Fortunately, veterinarians are equipped with a number of tools to detect, diagnose, and treat it.

Family veterinarians are equipped to detect early signs of many heart diseases. Veterinary cardiac specialists offer cutting edge diagnostics and treatments that have greatly increased quality of life and survival times with affected dogs.

"A board certified veterinary cardiologist has gone through at least four years of additional training and a vigorous examination process, says Steven Rosenthal, DMV, Diplomate, ACVIM (Cardiology), of Cardiac Care for Pets. "They offer a higher level of expertise in the physical exam and cardiac diagnostic skills to help formulate treatment, monitoring, and potentially interventional plans for heart disease."



vm via Getty Images

What Is Heart Disease and Heart Failure?

Heart disease is defined as any abnormality of the heart, whether due to structural, functional, or electrical abnormalities. Heart disease can be categorized as follows:

1. Valvular disease, in which the heart valves don't open or (more often) close, properly
2. Myocardial disease, in which the heart muscle pumps too weakly or (less often) doesn't relax adequately
3. Arrhythmias, in which the heart beats too erratically, too fast, or too slow
4. Vascular disease, in which the blood vessels interfere with blood flow
5. Shunts, in which there are abnormal openings between the left and right side of the heart, or between the lungs and the body
6. Abnormally high or low levels of blood
7. Cardiac parasites, such as heartworms; or infections

Heart disease in turn can lead to heart failure. Heart failure manifests in two main ways: low output heart failure, in which the heart can't pump enough blood to oxygenate the organs; or congestive heart failure, in which fluid leaks from dammed up blood into tissues, causing fluid build-up in the lungs or abdomen.

Signs of low output heart failure include exercise intolerance, weakness, and fainting. Signs of congestive heart failure include coughing, difficulty breathing, or fluid build-up in the abdomen and legs. More advanced cases can also cause a bluish tint to the gums, rhythm abnormalities, and sudden death.

What Are Common Types of Heart Disease?

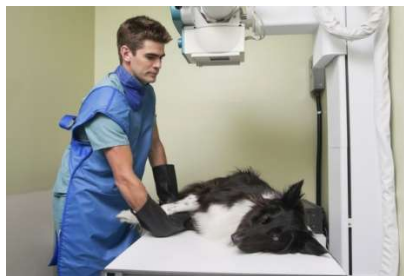
Heart diseases can be divided in a number of ways, including acquired versus congenital diseases.

Acquired Heart Disease

The majority of heart problems are acquired as a dog ages. These can be divided into conditions affecting the heart valves, and those affecting the heart muscle.

Mitral valve disease is the single most common heart disease, especially in small dogs. In it, the heart's mitral valve fails to close all the way, allowing blood to escape backwards through the valve opening. When this "regurgitation" is severe, fluid accumulates in the lungs, causing signs of congestive heart failure. Arrhythmias may also develop. Fortunately, only about 30% of dogs with mitral valve disease will progress to heart failure. Treatment is aimed at reducing these signs, rather than eliminating the cause.

Cardiomyopathy, better known as dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM), is the second most common heart disease in dogs, and the most common in certain large breeds. In it the heart muscles are weakened and don't allow the heart to contract and pump fully. As it worsens, the heart chambers enlarge, the valves may leak, and congestive heart failure develops. Sometimes arrhythmias can cause sudden death. Treatment is aimed at increasing contractility, stabilizing heart rhythm, and reducing signs of congestive heart failure.



leaf/Getty Images Plus

Pericardial effusion occurs when the sac around the heart fills with fluid, making it difficult for the heart to beat. It may occur for no known reason, or in response to inflammation or cancer of the heart. It presents as weakness and difficulty breathing and is usually an emergency. Treatment

entails using a syringe to remove the fluid, but often gives only temporary relief.

Heartworm infection is the most common preventable heart condition. Mosquito bites transmit the immature forms, which migrate to the heart and mature, eventually interfering with heart function. Prevention is with monthly medications. Treatment requires prolonged drug therapy.

Congenital Heart Disease

Less than 1% of heart disease in dogs is congenital, meaning the dog is born with the defect. Of these, patent ductus arteriosus and subaortic stenosis make up about half of all cases of congenital heart defects.

Patent ductus arteriosus (PDA), an abnormal opening between two major blood vessels leading from the heart, is the most common congenital heart defect. This opening is normal in fetuses, but normally closes around birth. If it doesn't close, the blood doesn't get properly oxygenated, and eventually it can cause congestive heart failure. Treatment is with surgery in small dogs, or with occluding devices placed by catheter in large dogs.

Subaortic Stenosis (SAS) is the second most common congenital heart defect in dogs. It's characterized by abnormal tissue that obstructs blood flow just below the aortic valve. The heart has to work harder to pump blood past it, eventually causing the heart muscle to thicken and weaken. Treatment is with medications.

Other congenital heart problems include pulmonic stenosis, ventricular septal defect, atrial septal defect, mitral valve dysplasia, tricuspid valve dysplasia, tetralogy of Fallot, cor triatriatum, and persistent right aortic arch.

How Is Heart Disease Diagnosed?

Diagnosing heart disease before the signs are obvious can give you a head start in treatment, and delay progression of the disease. That's one reason

to have your dog checked annually by your veterinarian, or even better, attend a heart health clinic offered at many AKC dog shows.

“The initial symptoms of heart disease can be found with awareness of changes in our pet’s behavior at home and having routine checkups with a primary care veterinarian,” says Bill Tyrrell, DMV, Diplomate, ACVIM (Cardiology), also of Cardiac Care for Pets. “At this checkup, if a heart murmur or irregular heartbeat or rhythm is noted, some diagnostic testing can be performed.” Dr. Tyrrell says that initial testing, like an electrocardiogram (EKG/ECG) or chest radiograph can be helpful. Vets may also do blood testing to look for markers in the blood (NTproBNP or Cardiac Troponin-I) that may help identify heart disease.



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With the progressive understanding over the past few years of the familial nature of many heart diseases, there are certain genetic markers of heart disease that can be evaluated as well (DCM in the Doberman, or ARVC in the Boxer, for example).

Some of the more commonly used diagnostic tools include:

- Auscultation, or listening with a stethoscope, can detect murmurs that indicate valvular disease, and may also indicate a possible arrhythmia. Taking the pulse, usually at the femoral artery, is often used in conjunction with auscultation.
- X-rays can detect an enlarged heart, or if the pericardial sac is filled with fluid
- An electrocardiogram (ECG) records the electrical activity of your dog’s heart to detect heart rhythm problems. This is done with your

dog awake, and the results can be sent remotely for reading by a specialist.

- A Holter monitor is basically a portable ECG that your dog wears for 24 hours at home, allowing a longer period to detect rhythm problems and correlate them with your dog's activity.
- A cardiologist can perform an echocardiogram, which uses ultrasound to visualize the heart valves, how much the heart contracts, thickness of the heart walls, and regurgitation at the valves
- Blood and urine tests can detect heartworms, heart disease markers, or the condition of other organs that may affect, or be affected by, the heart.
- Blood pressure can be measured, but is more difficult to take in dogs compared to humans.

How Is Heart Disease Treated?

Most treatments are aimed at controlling signs, rather than curing the condition. Limited exercise is generally suggested for most conditions. The goal is to prevent the heart from becoming overburdened.

Low-sodium cardiac diets are important to prevent fluid build-up in congestive heart failure. The extent of sodium restriction depends on the severity of the condition. A cardiologist is in the best position to advise you about diet.

Surgical intervention has generally been limited to implantation of pacemakers for dogs with irregular or slow heart rates, and surgery or balloon therapies for PDA. That's changing though.



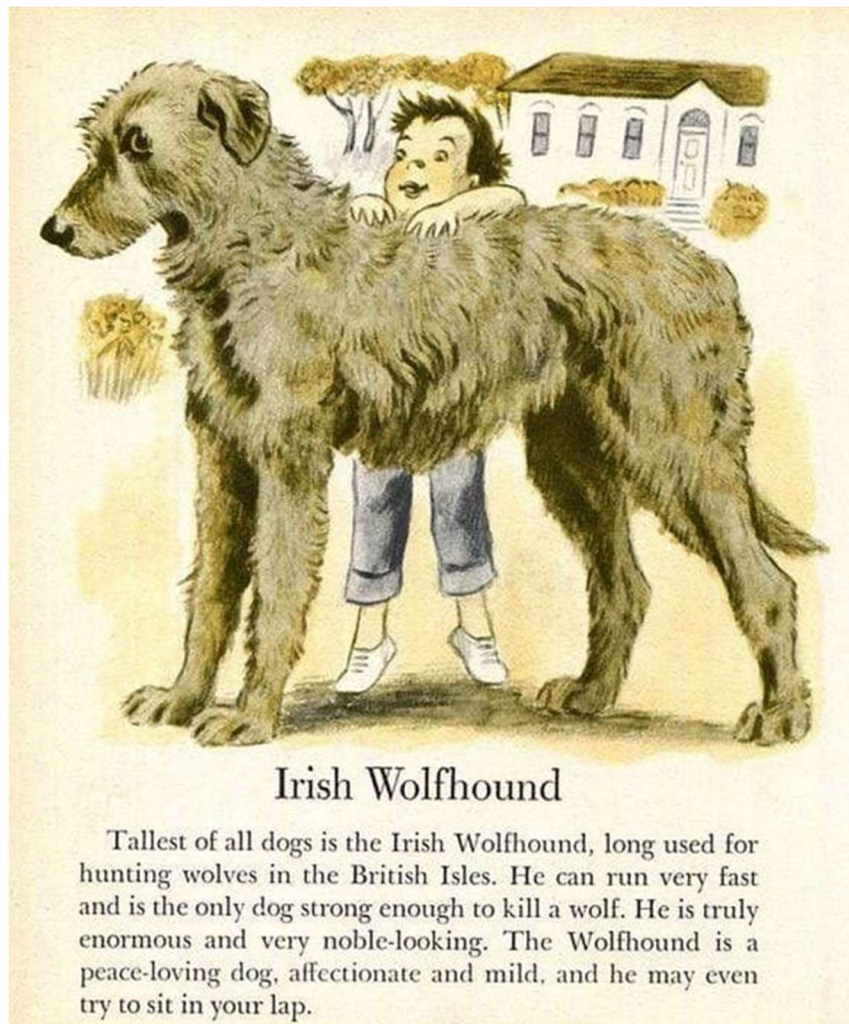
“Open-heart surgery for the first time has become available consistently in the United States this past year to repair the mitral valve in dogs at the veterinary college of the University of Florida,” says Rosenthal, “A novel catheter procedure (TEER- transcatheter edge to edge repair) is being offered at some institutions around the US to help treat the most common degenerative valve disorder in dogs.”

Some commonly used heart medications are:

- Furosemide, which helps congestive heart failure by removing excess fluid, especially from the lungs. It makes your dog urinate more, but also increases thirst.
- Enalapril and benazepril are angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors that reduce blood pressure and increase the heart’s output
- Sotalol or mexiletine help stabilize arrhythmias
- Pimobendan, sold under the brand name Vetmedin, helps heart muscles contract. It’s often prescribed for DCM.
- Spironolactone is a mild diuretic that seems to increase life spans in dogs with mitral valve disease
- Digoxin may be used for short term improvement of heart function
- Vetoquinol is a new drug for dogs used alongside other cardiac drugs to help decrease fluid build-up in the lungs from congestive heart failure
- Supplements with ingredients such as taurine and L-carnitine may improve heart function

This is far from a complete list, and new drugs are being introduced all the time. Drugs should be given under the guidance of a veterinary cardiologist, as some can be counterproductive if given before they’re really needed, and others can negatively impact quality of life.

Prevention and early detection and treatment is the best weapon. "Preventative care includes the use of heartworm preventative therapy, and keeping your dog physically fit and on a well-balanced diet," according to Tyrrell. "Certain nutritional deficiencies and some types of diets have been associated with the development of heart disease, so working with your family veterinarian to choose a well-balanced diet for your pet is imperative. If you have a breed at risk for heart disease (Doberman Pinschers, Cavalier King Charles Spaniels, and many other breeds) checking for genetic mutations and vigilant monitoring for heart disease is recommended, too."



Irish Wolfhound

Tallest of all dogs is the Irish Wolfhound, long used for hunting wolves in the British Isles. He can run very fast and is the only dog strong enough to kill a wolf. He is truly enormous and very noble-looking. The Wolfhound is a peace-loving dog, affectionate and mild, and he may even try to sit in your lap.

From the Irish Wolfhounds Lovers fb page

The Coffel Family's Mordu representing Tullamore D.E.W.



Dill's Celtic Festival

Pictures by Danielle St. Cyr





Pics Posted on fb by Rob Maloy from his friend ??





Southern Maryland Celtic Festival

Pictures by Danielle St. Cyr





Pictures by Jodie Jeweler



Poem By Pat Noone

The fairies dance and play under the moonlight
on this serene night in the Fairy Field.

The stillness is peaceful,
and the fairy trees stand silent, their branches swaying gently.

I can hear the fox on the hill calling out as usual,
while a large rock creaks and groans in the breeze.

The horses move softly through the bushes,
and I see the sheep munching peacefully on the grass.

The fairies, with smiling faces,
run up and down the Chiefton Current,
their laughter echoing in the night air.

Spring is just around the corner,
and
what a lovely evening it is in the Fairy Field.

Can Dogs Have Heart Attacks? Causes, Treatment, and Prevention

By Caroline Coile, PhD, Published: Sep 25, 2024 **AKC**

Can dogs have heart attacks? Heart attacks are often an owner's perception when their dog suddenly dies, but a heart attack is probably not the cause of death in most cases. Heart attacks are rare in dogs.

Meg Sleeper, DVM, DACVIM, Clinical Professor of Cardiology at the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine explains, "When people use the term 'heart attack' they are referring to myocardial infarction,

which most often occurs in humans due to coronary disease. Coronary disease, and heart attacks are very rare in veterinary species. Dogs with heart disease most commonly have acquired (degenerative) valve disease (particularly the small to medium-sized dogs) or myocardial disease (large to giant sized dogs).”

Dogs can die suddenly from a heart problem, but that doesn’t mean they had a heart attack.

What Other Cardiac Conditions Can Cause Sudden Signs of Heart Failure or Sudden Death?

“Heart attacks are not usually seen or diagnosed in dogs in a typical ER situation, unlike humans,” concurs AKC Chief Veterinary Officer Dr. Jerry Klein, DVM, who worked as an ER veterinarian for over 30 years. “But dogs do have a high percentage of heart disease (cardiomyopathy) and heart failure present in veterinary emergency rooms and veterinary hospitals.”

The most common cause of sudden cardiac death in dogs (and in people) is ventricular fibrillation (V-fib). V-fib occurs when the lower heart chambers contract in a very rapid and uncoordinated manner, so the heart doesn’t pump blood. As a result, the heart doesn’t pump blood to the rest of the body, and the dog can die.



None via Getty Images

Another type of irregular heartbeat is atrial fibrillation (A-fib), in which the two upper heart chambers beat rapidly and chaotically, uncoordinated with the beating of the two lower chambers. It results in less blood being pumped to the rest of the body, but not to the extent that V-fib reduces it.

Neither V-fib nor A-fib are the same as a heart attack.

What Causes a Heart Attack in Dogs?

While they're rare, heart attacks do occur in dogs. A heart attack occurs when the coronary artery, which is the large blood vessel that supplies blood to the heart, becomes blocked, depriving the heart of blood and oxygen. The blockage occurs when cholesterol covers the walls of the blood vessel, narrowing the passageway. If any of the cholesterol plaques break open, a blood clot forms at the breakage site. The clot can completely block the vessel, causing a heart attack. Fortunately, dogs don't have the problems with cholesterol and plaque that people do.

Heart attacks occur from conditions that make blood clots more likely. These include hypothyroidism, vasculitis (inflammation of blood vessels supplying the heart), tumors of the heart or its blood vessels, bacterial infection, and a complication of kidney disease called nephrotic syndrome. However, it's still rare for any of these to cause heart attacks.

What Are the Signs of a Heart Attack in Dogs?

We're well-versed in the signs of a heart attack in humans: chest pain, shortness of breath, nausea, dizziness, and arm pain. A dog may have similar signs, but since the dog can't tell us exactly what he's feeling, they can be harder to recognize. Here are some common signs of heart attacks in dogs.

Panting

Panting can be a sign of overheating, stress, pain or illness, as well as difficulty breathing. If you see no obvious reasons for your dog panting, and cooling or letting them rest for a minute doesn't help, this could be an extreme emergency due to a number of causes, and regardless, a reason to race to the emergency vet.

Vomiting

Vomiting can occur in response to extreme pain, stress, or dizziness. Again, this can be due to many causes. However, when your dog is vomiting in conjunction with other possible signs of heart attack, it's time to go to the ER.

Fever

A fever of over 103 degrees F may accompany a heart attack, but again, is more often indicative of another problem.

Increased Heart Rate

It's a good idea to practice taking your dog's pulse in case you're ever in a position where you need to compare what's normal. Increased heart rate generally means over 100 beats per minute in large dogs, and 140 beats per minute in small breeds. You can either feel directly over the left chest wall, or inside the upper thigh near the groin. Count the beats in 15 seconds and multiply by four. But again, a fast heart rate can happen secondary to pain or stress.



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Front Leg Pain

Just as people may have arm pain during a heart attack, dogs may have front leg pain. Signs of front leg pain in dogs include limping, holding up one leg, or whining when walking.

Physical Weakness

Dogs with a heart attack may seem lethargic, or have difficulty standing or walking. They may even become completely immobilized.

Rigid Posture

Holding the body in a rigid position may accompany a heart attack in dogs.

Confusion

They may seem confused or disoriented, perhaps not recognizing familiar people.

Anxiety

They may be restless, and may pace and whine.

Head Tilt

Holding the head in a tilted position may accompany a heart attack in dogs.

Seizure

Seizures may occur due to the physical stress.

Sudden Death

As with people, sometimes a heart attack causes sudden death. Though it is rare and shocking, it's unfortunately possible.

Heart attacks are rare in dogs, so more often than not, any of these signs are more likely due to another cause. But especially if several occur together, they could signal a heart attack.

What Should You Do if You Suspect Your Dog Is Having a Heart Attack?



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“Little can be done at home, so it is of the utmost importance to receive prompt veterinary attention,” advises Klein.

Keep your dog as calm as possible as you transport them to the closest emergency vet. Call first or have a passenger call as you’re driving. Don’t attempt CPR unless you’re trained in it, as it’s not always advisable and can do more harm than good.

Don’t encourage your dog to eat or drink, as they could vomit and aspirate if they’re having problems with consciousness.

How Is a Heart Attack Diagnosed and Treated in Dogs?

Diagnosis will require listening to the heart and lungs, plus several tests to decide if it’s a heart problem at all, and then to rule out other more likely causes. “The measurement of cardiac troponin test can be used to assist in diagnosing any damage to the heart muscle,” explains Klein. This test can indicate whether the heart is involved, but can’t determine why.

These tests often include:

- Blood tests to check for infections or possibly thyroid deficiency
- Radiographs to determine if the heart is enlarged, has fluid around it, or masses attached to it
- An electrocardiogram to determine if the heart’s electrical impulses are normal and detect any arrhythmias
- An echocardiogram to detect fluid around the heart, masses, heart valve function, heart muscle function, and possibly even clots

Even before your vet can run any tests, your dog may need emergency treatment to be resuscitated and regain normal heart activity. The veterinarian may also give your dog blood thinners to make it easier for their heart to pump blood. Other treatments will depend on which causes your veterinarian identifies.



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Treatment may include thyroid replacement therapy for thyroid-deficient dogs, surgery to remove masses when possible, medications to lessen the impact of kidney disease, antibiotics to fight infections, anti-arrhythmic medications to correct arrhythmias, and medications to help the heart pump. In some cases, your veterinarian may advise implanting a pacemaker.

The dog may need to stay at the veterinary hospital until they're stabilized. Even after they go home, your dog may need to wear a Holter monitor, which records heart rhythms throughout the day for 24 hours. The recording is then analyzed to see how the heart responds during rest and activity.

Treatment most often includes blood thinners to dissolve the clot. Generally, the dog will need to continue to take blood thinners for the rest of its life.

Can a Heart Attack in Dogs Be Prevented?

In humans, we're taught to monitor our cholesterol, eat heart-healthy foods, and get plenty of exercise, along with having our arteries checked to ensure they're clear of plaques. Dogs should also eat a healthy diet and get plenty of exercise, but cholesterol doesn't seem to be the problem for them that it is for us.

"The most important thing owners can do is have their dogs evaluated by a boarded veterinary cardiologist if there are symptoms suggestive of heart disease that arise in their pet (a heart murmur, an irregular heart rhythm, for example), feed a nutritious diet and stay up to date on preventative

care (such as heart worm and ectoparasite preventatives),” advises Dr. Sleeper.

It’s essential for your dog to be regularly checked by their veterinarian, and certainly if the dog shows any signs suggestive of heart disease.

Dog Diarrhea: Signs, Symptoms, and Treatments

By **AKC Staff**, Updated: May 20, 2024

It’s not a topic anyone likes to discuss, but if you own a dog, chances are you’ve found yourself cleaning up a smelly mess of dog diarrhea. Most dogs will experience loose stool or diarrhea at some point in their life. Diarrhea is a common dog condition and it varies in frequency, duration, and intensity from dog to dog.

You might not be able to totally prevent your dog’s diarrhea, but knowing why dogs get diarrhea might help limit the number times your dog has an unpleasant episode. Sometimes you’ll know the cause of your dog’s digestive problems; for instance, when they are something that they shouldn’t have. But in some cases, diarrhea in dogs can be a cause for concern.

It can be helpful to have dog diarrhea treatment on hand when this strikes. Dog diarrhea medicine and anti-diarrhea supplements for dogs can be helpful, depending on the cause of diarrhea.

Why Dogs Get Diarrhea

There are several differences between the way dogs and people digest food. Enzymes in our mouths break down food while it’s still in our mouths. Dogs’ mouths and jaws are made for wolfing down food, and their enzymes mostly kill bacteria. This is why they can tolerate things in their mouths — food or otherwise — that would send humans to the hospital.

Food travels rapidly down the dog’s esophagus and enters their stomach in chunks, where most digestion takes place. A dog’s stomach acids are about

three times stronger than those of people, so they can digest food that is pretty much whole. Under normal circumstances, the time it takes for food to get from a dog's mouth and through the small and large intestines should be under 10 hours, with the end result being a firm, well-formed poop.

Top Causes of Dog Diarrhea

Many things can disrupt this well-balanced canine digestive system, causing dogs to have diarrhea or constipation. Some causes, like eating too much grass, are not serious at all. (Some dogs really enjoy grazing on grass.) Others causes can be life-threatening problems, such as an indigestible object (like a rock) lodged in the stomach, or a disease like cancer.



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When in doubt, always consult your veterinarian. There are many reasons why a dog may develop loose stools or diarrhea, and sometimes the cause is clear. But in other cases, it can require further investigation. Common causes of dog diarrhea include eating what they shouldn't, whether it's too much food or spoiled food, changes in diet, food intolerance or allergies.

But other factors can cause diarrhea in dogs. Parasites, including roundworms, hookworms, and whipworms, can cause diarrhea. Other illnesses, like Coccidia, Giardia, Parvovirus, and Distemper, could also be the cause. If you can't identify the cause of your dog's diarrhea, it persists over a few days, or it's accompanied by other symptoms, talk to your veterinarian about next steps. Not all of these diarrhea treatments will be helpful if your dog's diarrhea is linked to something more serious, like kidney and liver disease, inflammatory bowel disease, and cancer.

Stress and other medication can also cause dog diarrhea. Change in schedule or diet can be things that cause dogs stress. Diarrhea can also be a side effect of another medication, so if your dog is on antibiotics or other medication, check with your veterinarian to see if diarrhea is a potential side effect.

How Poop Reflects Your Dog's Health

The consistency and color of diarrhea reveal a lot about the cause of the diarrhea and what is happening in your dog's gut. Take careful note of the color, consistency, and anything else that might help you describe your dog's symptoms to a vet. In many cases, dog diarrhea will resolve after a few days of home treatment, but it's a good idea to give your vet a call if it continues any longer, or you don't know why they're having it.

Knowing the normal color, shape, and consistency of your dog's poop will help you and your vet figure out what is wrong when your dog gets diarrhea. These factors will help your vet determine where the problem is originating along the dog's digestive tract.

What Dog Poop Should Look Like

A "perfect" dog poop looks chocolate brown, is shaped like a log, compact, and easy to scoop. Experts say it should feel like cookie dough or Play-Doh when pressed. Large volumes of poop, a pudding-like or watery consistency, signs of jelly-like mucus, or blood streaks are all not normal.



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What Does Dog Poop Color Mean?

Color can also indicate a lot about what is going on inside your dog's gut. Chocolate brown dog poop is normal, while dog poop colors like orange,

green, or gray may signify issues with such organs as liver, gall bladder, or pancreas.

Black tarry stool in dogs is very serious, and may point to internal bleeding. If you see black tarry poop or bright red blood in your dog's poop, contact your vet as soon as possible. Purina has also provided a handy reference—a color wheel of dog poop.

How Often Your Dog Poops

Small amounts of poop with straining, several times in an hour, can be a sign of inflammation of your dog's large bowel. Three or four dog poops with large volume suggest small bowel disorder.

Objects in Dog Poop

Oddly shaped or colored solid objects can tell you what your dog has gotten into. Several small white rice-like shapes, for example, may signify a tapeworm infestation. Grass, wood, or string could tell you that your dog has eaten something that they couldn't digest.

As gross as it may seem to look at your dog's poop while you clean up your backyard or pick up after them on your evening walk, it's important that you examine your dog's poop regularly as a gauge for what their normal poop looks like. This way, when you notice something off, or if your dog has diarrhea, you can give your vet as many details as possible.

Armed with this knowledge of what's normal and abnormal for your dog's poop, the vet will be able to tell you whether to schedule an exam or whether you can treat your dog's diarrhea at home.

Dog Diarrhea Treatments



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A great many cases of dog diarrhea are mild and, with your vet's advice, can be treated at home without a trip to their office. There are a number of key ingredients you'll often find in dog diarrhea treatments, including kaolin and pectin. Kaolin helps to absorb and remove bacterial toxins, while pectin detoxifies, coats, and soothes gastrointestinal membranes.

Many treatments also include probiotics, which promote the growth of good bacteria in your dog's colon. Your dog's diarrhea may respond to a regimen of very basic treatments, which come in a few forms. An over-the-counter dog diarrhea treatment is good to have on hand, and can be ordered online for quick delivery for those occasional bouts of loose stools or diarrhea that every dog can experience.

Dog diarrhea treatments come in many forms, including liquid. Liquid dog diarrhea treatments are a good option for mild digestive problems like vomiting, diarrhea, and gas, when you know the cause of diarrhea and you have the green light from your vet. These are often fast-acting and provide quick relief.

Chewable dog diarrhea treatments and paste diarrhea treatments can make your dog feel like they're getting a treat. Powder dog diarrhea treatments are a good choice if your pet isn't good at taking medication. These are often tasteless, and can be sprinkled over your dog's regular food.

Fasting Your Dog for Diarrhea Relief

Withholding food from your dog for 12 to 24 hours, and frequently providing fresh, clean water in small amounts can help clear the cause of the digestive upset and allow your dog's gastrointestinal tract to settle. It's usually the first line of attack for diarrhea. Before you decide to fast your dog for diarrhea, be sure that your dog is healthy enough to handle it—call your vet if you aren't sure. Puppies and elderly dogs, for example, aren't candidates for fasting. Also, a fast may not be appropriate for small dogs who do not have the physical reserves of their larger cousins. Always consult your vet if you have any doubt if fasting is right for your dog.

Diarrhea in dogs can lead to dehydration, so make sure to give your dog access to fresh, clean water at all times. You may also offer diluted unflavored Pedialyte to help maintain electrolyte balance, but only under a vet's advice.

Foods That Can Help Dog Diarrhea



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After letting your dog fast for diarrhea relief, simple foods are usually slowly introduced to your dog's diet. Many dog owners start with foods that act as binders, which can help normalize stool consistency. Some tried-and-true methods include:

- Boil high-quality white rice in a lot of water, strain out the grains, and offer your dog the cooled-off creamy white, starchy broth that's left. A splash of unsalted chicken broth or a spoon of meat baby food can make it more palatable.

- Plain, cooked white rice
- Pumpkin can help with dog diarrhea. Canned 100% pumpkin puree that you already have on the shelf, pet-safe pumpkin powder, or a pet-specific canned pumpkin for dogs has the odd distinction of being effective both for diarrhea and for constipation. If you purchase canned pumpkin in a grocery store, be sure to read the label to be sure it's 100% pumpkin and not "pumpkin pie filling" which includes sugar and other ingredients in addition to pumpkin.
- Plain yogurt with active cultures can help dogs who can tolerate milk and milk products.
- Probiotics to promote live bacteria that aid digestion (these are also found in yogurt)
- Boiled potatoes without skin
- Plain, low-sodium, low-fat cottage cheese
- Plain protein sources such as egg (cooked with no butter or oil) or chicken (without skin)
- Herbs, such as fennel, may have gut-soothing properties
- Some manufacturers offer sensitive stomach dog foods that can soothe stomach problems. You may need to get sensitive digestion prescription dog food with a prescription from your vet.

Methods that work for one dog's diarrhea may not help another dog, so you might need to do a little experimentation to find the right formula when your dog gets the runs. It might also be helpful to write down what works to stop your dog's diarrhea and what doesn't, so you'll know what to do if your dog gets diarrhea again.

Once you find a recovery diet that agrees with your dog's digestion and doesn't cause a diarrhea relapse, you can slowly increase the portions over a period of days, and then start to add small amounts of your dog's regular food until your dog's poop is back to normal.



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Should You Walk a Dog With Diarrhea?

If your dog is feeling well enough to exercise, it's fine to take them on a walk as usual. Just be sure they have access to clean water to stay hydrated. Just note that doggie cleanup may be a little messier than usual.

When Should You Worry About Dog Diarrhea?

If your dog has other symptoms — such as lethargy, fever, vomiting, or weakness — in addition to diarrhea, you should take them to the vet as soon as possible. You may also want to bring them in for a checkup if diarrhea persists for more than a few days, as your vet may want to check for parasites, infections, or illnesses that could be causing the problem.

The right time to contact a vet for dog diarrhea depends very much on what's normal for your dog's poop habits. Unfortunately, some dogs are more prone to digestive disorders than others, so it helps to be mindful of what is and isn't out of the ordinary for your individual dog.

Calendar of Events on last page



PVIWC List of Meeting & Events 2025

March 30 & 31	<i>Specialty Harford County Equestrian Center, Bel Air, MD (Meeting Following Judging), Harford County Equestrian Ctr, 608 N Tollgate Rd, Bel Air, MD 21014</i>
April 6	'Paint Your Pet' Fundraiser, Checkerspot Brewery, Baltimore, 3PM
April 11 & 12	Dills Celtic Festival, Dills Tavern, 237 N Baltimore St, Dillsburg, PA 17019
April 19& 20	<i>Irish Wolfhound Assoc of the Carolinas Specialty</i>
April 26	Southern MD Celtic Festival, Jefferson Patterson Park, 10515 Mackall Rd, St Leonard, MD 20685
May 2 & 3	Annapolis Irish Festival, Anne Arundel County Fairgrounds, 1450 Generals Hwy, Crownsville, MD
May 3 & 4	Faerie Festival Marshy Point Rocky Point Park, 2200 Rocky Point Rd, Essex, MD 21221
May 18	Show Wrap Up Meeting
May 25 - 29	<i>IWCA National Specialty Cache County Fairgrounds, Logan, UT</i>
June 14 & 15	Carroll County Celtic Festival, Carroll County Ag Center, 706 Agriculture Ctr Dr, Westminster, MD 21157
June 8	Regular Meeting – Brian Boru Irish Rest. 489 Ritchie Hwy #103, Severna Park, MD
June 21	Penn Mar Irish Festival, Pheasant Run Greenhouse 10241 Brillheart Rd, Glen Rock, PA 17327
June 27 - 29	Celtic Fling <i>(with a concert on Friday night)</i> Mt Hope Winery, 2775 Lebanon Rd, Manheim, PA 17545
August 10	Regular Meeting
August	Oakenmist Ren Faire Howard County Fairgrounds
August 30 & 31	Virginia Scottish Games, 5089 Old Tavern Rd, The Plains, VA 20198
September 14	Fun Day
September 20-21	PA Renn Faire Shamrocks and Shenanigans Weekend, Mt Hope Winery, 2775 Lebanon Rd, Manheim, PA 17545
October 5 & 6	<i>Irish Wolfhound Assoc of the Delaware Valley Specialty</i>
October 19	Regular Meeting
November 7 - 9	Maryland Irish Festival, 2200 York Rd, Timonium, MD 21093
November 16	Regular Meeting
December 14	Holiday Party Montgomery's, 800 River Rd, Sykesville, MD 21784
December ~16	Druid Hill Winter Solstice 5Miler, 1 Safari Place, Baltimore, MD 21217
December	Military Bowl Parade, Annapolis, MD

Dates, Time, or location to be determined and subject to change on some events.

Need Volunteers to Host

