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Anal Glands

What can we do to prevent anal gland issues?

- **Feed a species appropriate, raw food diet.** Dry foods make for voluminous, mushy stool because most manufacturers add an unnaturally high amount of fiber which creates volume but not necessarily firmness. When feces pass out of the rectum, it's the pressure of the firm stool against the colon wall that effectively expresses the anal glands. This tells us that firm stool is a major component of happy, healthy anal glands. Dogs fed a raw food diet with raw bone content have smaller, firm stools.
- **Don't have your vet or groomer unnecessarily express your dog's anal glands.** When a dog's anal glands are manually expressed over and over, it causes unnecessary trauma to the muscles and oftentimes muscle tone is lost and the body ends up not being able to express them on its own.
- **Supplement with canned pumpkin, probiotics and digestive enzymes.** Probiotics and digestive enzymes introduce beneficial enzymes and bacteria into your pet's gut to aid in digestion and to help firm their stools. These can be found in *Primal Raw Goat's Milk*, *Steve's Raw Goat's Milk Yogurt*, *Answer's Raw Fermented Goat or Cow's Kefir*, *Nature's Farmacy Digestive Enhancer or Probiotic Max*, *Animal Essentials Plant Enzymes*, or *Ark Naturals Gentle Digest*. Because of canned pumpkin's fiber content it firms up the stool nicely. Try adding in 1 tablespoon of *Nummy Tum-Tum*, *Fruitables* or *Weruva Pumpkin* per every 10 pounds of body weight.
- **Make sure they are getting plenty of exercise.** Exercise will help strengthen their rectal and abdominal muscles which allows them to put more pressure on their anal glands when they use the bathroom. Exercise also gets things moving and encourages bowel movements.
- **Address inflammation and allergies.** Anal glands, located in the rectum, are at the tail end (pun intended) of the GI tract. If your pet is suffering from GI inflammation, the anal glands can be affected. Changing to a species appropriate, raw food diet like *Steve's Real Raw Food*, *K9 Kravings*, *Answers*, *Primal*, *Tucker's* or *Stella & Chewy's Raw Diet* and adding in a supplement like *Charlotte's Web* or *Holistic Hound CBD Oil*, *DGP* or the raw dairy options mentioned above are natural ways to treat inflammation. Food and environmental allergies can irritate the anal glands as well and will need to be addressed. Check out our allergies handout for more information.

<https://healthypets.mercola.com/sites/healthypets/archive/2009/12/23/your-pets-anal-glands.aspx>

<https://www.dogsnaturalymagazine.com/anal-gland-problems/>

<https://healthypets.mercola.com/sites/healthypets/archive/2015/07/15/assessing-dog-poop.aspx>

***This sheet is for basic technical information only. We encourage you to continue your own research on these subjects.**