

Dog Vomiting: The Home Triage & Stability Checklist

A Pawssum Mobile Vet Resource for Proactive Pet Parents

IMPORTANT: This checklist is for informational purposes. If your dog appears distressed, unresponsive, or is experiencing unproductive retching (trying to vomit but nothing comes up), call a vet immediately.

PART 1: The Event Log

Keep track of the details so you can report accurately to your vet.

- **Time of first episode:** _____
- **Number of episodes (last 6 hours):** _____
- **Description of vomit: ***
 - ☐ Yellow/Green Bile
 - ☐ Clear/White Foam
 - ☐ Undigested Food
 - ☐ Fresh Blood (Red) or Digested Blood (Coffee Grains)

PART 2: The 60-Second Stability Check

Perform these three checks to see how your dog's body is handling the fluid loss.

1. The Gum Color Test (Circulation)

Lift the lip. Press your finger firmly against the gum until it turns white. Let go.

- **Normal:** Returns to pink in under 2 seconds.
- **Worry:** Takes longer than 2 seconds or gums feel dry/tacky.

2. The Skin Tent Test (Hydration)

Gently pinch the skin between the shoulder blades and release.

- **Normal:** Snaps back instantly.
- **Worry:** Skin remains "tented" or moves back slowly.

3. The Abdominal Check (Pain)

Gently run your hands along your dog's belly.

- **Normal:** Relaxed and soft.
- **Worry:** Tense, hard, or the dog groans/walks away.

PART 3: The Decision Matrix

Use this to decide your next steps.

| GREEN: MONITOR | YELLOW: CALL PAWSSUM | RED: EMERGENCY |
|---|---|--|
| Vomited 1x, still happy/active. | Vomited 3+ times in 12 hours. | Unproductive retching (Bloat risk). |
| Gums are pink and moist. | Lethargic or "acting quiet." | Pale, white, or blue gums. |
| No blood present. | Refusing to drink water. | Known ingestion of toxins/poison. |
| Action: Fast for 6 hrs, then bland diet. | Action: Book an in-home consult. | Action: Go to an ER clinic now. |

Pro-Tip for Pet Parents

If you decide to book a mobile vet, **do not clean up the vomit immediately**. Taking a photo or covering it with a paper towel for the vet to inspect provides vital diagnostic clues (such as the presence of foreign objects or specific bile colors) that help us treat your dog faster.

Need a Vet to Come to You?

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