

Coccidiosis

Basics

OVERVIEW

- An intestinal infection, traditionally associated with *Isospora canis* (dogs) and *Isospora felis* (cats); other species of *Isospora* may be present
- The parasites are specific for their species and do not cross over
- *Toxoplasma gondii* in cats and *Cryptosporidium parvum* in neonatal pups and kittens
- *Toxoplasma* may cause similar symptoms in cats but can potentially be a public health threat

SIGNALMENT

Species

- Cats and Dogs especially younger animals

SIGNS/OBSERVED CHANGES IN THE PET

- Watery to mucoid and sometimes blood-tinged diarrhea
- Weak puppies and kittens
- Immunocompromised animals

CAUSES & RISK FACTORS

- Infected dogs or cats contaminating the environment with oocysts of *Isospora* or *Cryptosporidium* in their feces
- Stress and crowding, often present in puppy mill situations

DIAGNOSIS

- Usually diagnosed by fecal analysis, other test usually unremarkable

Treatment

- Usually treated as outpatient
- Fluid and diet to help stabilize weak animals

Medications

- Sulfadimethoxine or sulfadiazine/trimethoprim for 7-10 days or until feces free of the parasites
- Tylosin and clindamycin have also been used

PATIENT MONITORING

- Follow-up fecal tests until cleared of parasites

PREVENTIONS AND AVOIDANCE

- Keep year, kennels etc free of fecal matter: watch pets for fecal exposure at dog parks etc

