

ANOREXIA IN DOGS

A Clinical Approach

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- Clinical approach
- Looking at practical details
- Plan to give you ideas on how to work through a case
- Basic science



Anorexia...

- Decrease in appetite
- Decrease in interest in food
- WHY???



- We need to do detective work
- Clients will say “ my dog has not been eating for a few days, can you fix him?”
- We need to ask questions to gain information without leading the owner in any direction—*ask what does the dog's stool look like?, not does he have diarrhea?*
- Get a full history of what has been happening in the dog's life and the owner's life (stress, job change, etc)



Creating a differential diagnosis....

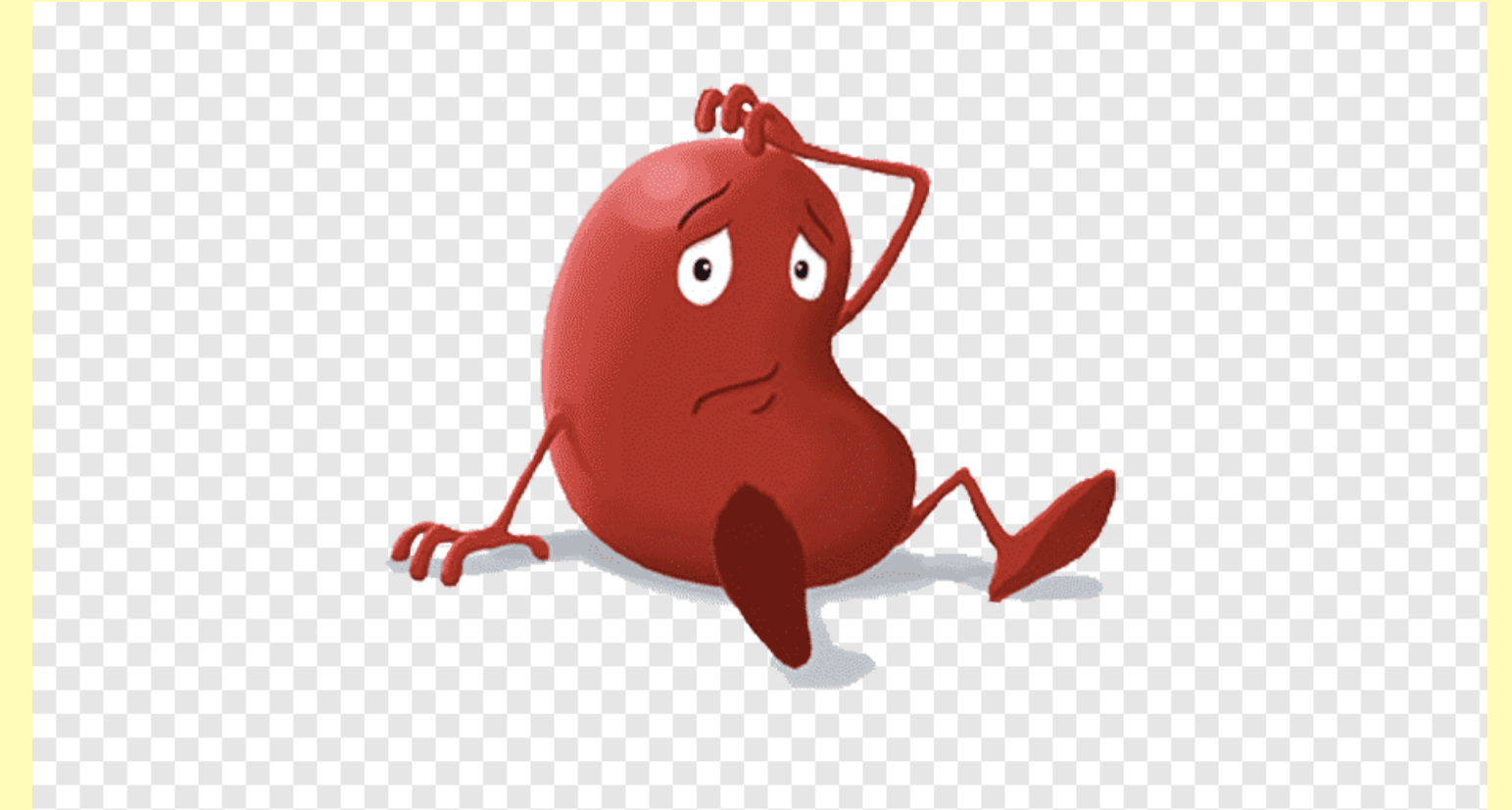
- Get full signalment of dog (age, breed, sex)
- What is a typical day for the dog?
- What has changed recently? —new food, new treat, exposure to other animals, change in owner's schedule
- How long have the signs been going on?

What diseases/ conditions can cause anorexia?

- Metabolic Disease
- Organ Dysfunction
- Medications
- Gastrointestinal Disease
- Inflammation
- Pain
- Anxiety and Stress

Metabolic Disease

- Kidney Disease
- Liver Disease
- Cardiac Disease
- Pancreatitis



Organ Dysfunction

- Thyroid disease
- Adrenal disease
- Anal gland issues
- Tumors

Medications

- Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs
- Antibiotics
- Opioids
- Any medication can potentially cause a reaction in any individual

Gastrointestinal Disease

- Foreign Body
- Obstruction
- Ileus
- Parasites
- Abnormal microbiome

Inflammation and Pain

- Inflammatory mediators are known to decrease appetite
- Can be acute or chronic

Stress and Anxiety

- Any change in routine can affect some animals
- Increased stress in people is detrimental for health, the same is true in dogs

Diagnostic Work Up

- Some of your suspicions about the cause of anorexia will have to be supported with diagnostics
- Blood work
- Radiographs

Consequences of not eating...

- Decreased mucosal mass in gastrointestinal tract (GIT)
- Changes in microbiome of GIT
- Increased intestinal permeability
- Loss of barrier function of GIT
- Decreased immune response in GIT and all of body
- Ultimately weight loss

- Remember the owner may not see the initial loss of appetite as a problem until he/she starts to see weight loss
- Some owners will recognize the decreased appetite as a source of suffering



Treating the anorexia...

- Early intervention— treat the underlying disease when possible
- Offer multiple types of food—home cooked, canned
- Use an appetite stimulant

Appetite stimulants...

- Mirtazapine
- Valium
- Capromorelin (entyce)
- Glucocorticoids (last resort in many cases)

Questions/ Discussion

