

# Signs of Health and Sickness in Your Dog

By Sherry Woodard

Your dog may not be able to communicate with you in words, but he can give you signs to indicate whether he is healthy or sick.

Here are some signs of a healthy dog:

- Skin is smooth and supple, and free of scabs, growths and rashes.
- Coat is glossy, without dandruff or any areas of baldness, and with no signs of parasites.
- Eyes are bright, not watering, and free of discharge.
- Ears on the inside should be light pink (though dark-skinned dogs may have black pigment), clean or with just a trace of wax, not swollen, and free of discharge.
- Nose should be moist – not necessarily wet, but not dry or cracked.
- Temperature should be 100 to 102.5 degrees (101.5 is the average).
- Gums are normally pink, but they can have black or gray pigment.
- Stools should be firm and free of parasites.



One of your responsibilities as a dog owner is to bring her to a veterinarian if you think she may be ill. Here are some signs that your dog could be sick:

- A significant change in behavior (such as increased irritability)
- Perceived pain or lethargy
- Visible pain (such as limping or chewing on a joint)
- Persistent vomiting
- Persistent diarrhea
- Persistent coughing
- Lack of appetite
- Excessive drinking
- Excessive urination

If any of these symptoms last more than 24 hours, you should bring your dog to your veterinarian. You should also bring her in for routine checkups and dental care.

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