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MALABSORPTION AND BACTERIAL OVERGROWTH

What is malabsorption and bacterial overgrowth?

Bacterial overgrowth is a condition of the small intestine resulting in increased numbers of bowel bacteria. Our primary concern is small intestinal bacterial overgrowth (SIBO).

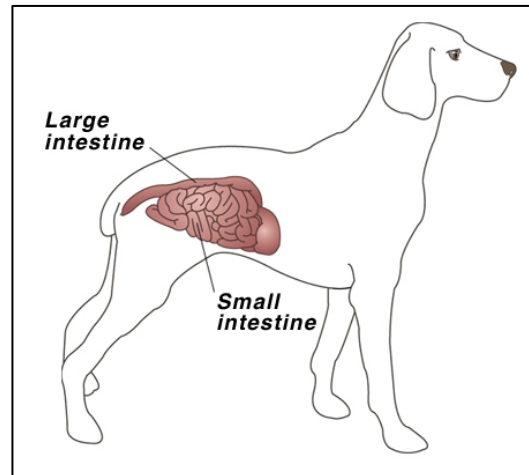
The bacteria cause damage to the absorptive surface of the bowel so digested food cannot be absorbed through the bowel and into the body.

Is this the same as an infection causing enteritis?

Malabsorption and SIBO results in diarrhea, similar to that associated with enteritis. However, with bacterial overgrowth the diarrhea is chronic in nature, often lasting weeks or months.

Are some dogs more susceptible than others?

German Shepherd Dogs appear to have a higher incidence of malabsorption problems. They are frequently associated with exocrine pancreatic insufficiency (EPI) but SIBO can also occur.



What are the usual signs of malabsorption?

The principal sign is weight loss with chronic diarrhea.

Can it be differentiated from pancreatic insufficiency on the symptoms?

Specific blood and fecal tests are necessary to differentiate EPI and SIBO. Dogs with malabsorption often do not have as voracious an appetite and the diarrhea is usually not as voluminous as EPI.

What is the cause of this condition?

Many cases are idiopathic or unknown. SIBO is frequently associated with exocrine pancreatic insufficiency.

Can the condition be cured?

Many cases respond to long term antibiotics such as oxytetracycline combined with special diets are the preferred treatments.

