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Two Techniques to Help Your Dog Stop Passing Gas

By **Jillita Horton**

If you have a dog, you know how stinky a dog's passed gas is. You don't hear the dog farting; it is silent -- but deadly; the stink is worse than the gas passed by humans, though some people might refute that.

A dog's flatulence can really stink up a room, and it lingers. When a dog passes gas, this is a normal biological activity, but does it have to occur so often? Can it be minimized? I asked Dr. Michel Selmer, DVM, of [Advanced Animal Care Center](#) in Huntington, NY.

Dr. Selmer explains, "Flatulence comes from an excess of gases in the intestinal tract. These may represent air that has been swallowed; produced in the biochemical process of digestion; diffusion from the bloodstream, or gases produced by the bacteria that populate the intestinal tract. Over 99 percent of the gases that pass from the intestinal tract are odorless; the gases with objectionable odors are typically those containing hydrogen sulfide."

Flatulence does not signal a health problem. "A surprising amount of air is swallowed with the simple act of eating and if this is not burped out, it must exit through the other end," says Dr. Selmer.

"The amount of air swallowed tends to be increased when dogs feel they must eat quickly or in the brachycephalic breeds (*e.g., Pug, English bulldog, Boston terrier*) who tend to breathe more by mouth rather than by nose," due to a short nose. "Swallowed air tends not to have objectionable odor."

But what about the really offensive flatulence? Dr. Selmer explains, "The really stinky gases are produced by colon (large intestine) bacteria. Dietary fiber in pet food is not readily digestible by the pet's own enzyme systems, but is digested by the gas-producing bacteria of the colon. As these fibers are broken down, gases are produced. A diet heavy in fibers tends to favor these gas-producing organisms. The more supportive the intestinal environment, the more bacteria there will be and ultimately more gas will be produced."

Thus, the solution to getting your dog to pass less gas, or do it less frequently, is:

No. 1: Lower the fiber content in your dog's food. Read ingredients of dog foods for anything that is fibrous. Check the nutrition label to see if a fiber content per serving is listed. Cut back or avoid food that contains grains.

No. 2: Work on getting your dog to eat at a slower pace. A dog is more likely to rush through a meal if it gets only one big meal a day; it'll be that much hungrier at feeding time, and thus more apt to scarf down the food.

It's perfectly okay to feed a dog multiple tiny meals throughout the day. This doesn't mean you must feed your pet a bigger quantity of food. Parse out the normal daily intake throughout the day. Less food eaten at any given time will mean less gas passed by your dog.

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