

Digestive Problems

If your cat vomits frequently, a digestive problem may be to blame. Learn how to help your veterinarian diagnose digestion problems.

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Owner observation is important to determining causes of gastrointestinal problems. Most owners are familiar with the posture and sound their cats make when spitting up a hairball—a normal cause of vomiting. Finding a hairball is a good explanation of intermittent vomiting episodes.

Dietary indiscretion is another common cause of vomiting or diarrhea. When cats eat food or materials that they are not used to digesting, they upset their gastrointestinal tracts. In addition, food intolerance can trigger vomiting or diarrhea. Owners should note what foods they offer, including brand, type and flavor. In this case, controlling gastrointestinal upset may be as easy as removing one specific food type from a cat's diet.

Veterinary examination is the next step in finding the cause of gastrointestinal tract irregularity, including a complete history and a thorough physical exam. Important steps include examining the mouth and feeling (palpating) the organs within the abdominal cavity. If these steps fail to uncover the specific cause for vomiting or diarrhea, additional testing can be performed.