

Bline's Awesome Aussie's has had difficulties erradicating Giardia among our dogs and pups, as it lives in the ground for long periods of time. It is not life threatening, however, I want you to be aware of what it is, just in case your vet recommends treatment. We use bleach spray in all our inside & outside puppy play/sleeping areas in addition to constant poop pick-up.

Giardia is a single-celled parasite that lives in your dog's intestine. It is present in the ground and water supplies wherever there is livestock or animals. It does not affect the majority of adult dogs as their immune systems are able to fight them off. It can infect the weaker immune systems of older dogs, but more frequently infects puppies. Dogs become infected when they swallow *Giardia* that may be present in water or other substances that have been soiled with feces. (Guess what puppies do? Run through their poop and then play their water bowls, constantly!)

How do I know if my dog has a parasite like Giardia?

Your veterinarian can perform a test on your dog's feces to see if it has giardiasis, but usually this is only done if your pup has had persistent diarrhea. *If your dog is infected with Giardia **AND it is causing them diarrhea**, your veterinarian can prescribe safe, effective treatment for control of the parasite.* In most cases the pups immune systems will be able to tackle the parasite by the age of 4 mo. old and you won't even know they ever had it.

How will Giardia affect my dog?

Many dogs infected with significant levels of *Giardia*, usually have diarrhea which can also result in dehydration. Having persistent giardiasis for a long time could cause weight loss and poor health conditions.

How do I prevent my dog from getting Giardia?

1. Practice good personal hand hygiene.
2. Disinfect the puppy's environment regularly.
3. Dispose of feces promptly.
4. Bathe the dog at the end of treatment to reduce the spread of Giardia cysts.
5. Prevent dogs from ingesting potentially contaminated water, food or soil.

Can Giardia be passed from dog-to-dog?

Your dog or cat might get infected by: Being in contact with infected poop from another dog or cat. Rolling and playing in contaminated soil. Licking its body after contact with a contaminated surface (for example, a dirty litter box or dog cage.)

Can humans be harmed by Giardia?

Giardia is a common cause of diarrhea in people, but dog *Giardia* is not generally considered to spread from animals to humans. While human *Giardia* may infect dogs and then be passed on to humans, the majority of human cases are of human origin. Human immune systems will usually fight off the *Giardia* on its own within 2-4 weeks.

Resources: [Cornell Veterinary University: www.vet.cornell.edu](http://www.vet.cornell.edu)
[Centers for Disease Control & Prevention: www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
[Pets and Parasites: www.petsandparasites.org](http://www.petsandparasites.org)
[AKC-American Kennel Club: www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org)