GI EXCHANGE: Winning Combination to Help Manage Pets with Diarrhea

Patients with acute diarrhea are often given metronidazole. Should a probiotic such as Purina Veterinary Diets® FortiFlora® Canine or Feline Nutritional Supplements be considered when using this common form of antibiotic therapy? Metronidazole is a versatile antibiotic and can be used to treat both parasitic and bacterial infections. FortiFlora, meanwhile, is a nutritional probiotic supplement that contains the probiotic Enterococcus faecium SF68 for the dietary management of dogs and cats with diarrhea. SF68 allows normal flora to repopulate the intestine to help restore balance. FortiFlora also contains high levels of antioxidant Vitamins A, E and C, and promotes a strong immune system.

When a veterinarian is dealing with acute diarrhea that it is either of parasitic origin, such as giardia, or bacterial origin, such as clostridia, it’s a good idea to consider using FortiFlora when prescribing metronidazole because of the demonstrated benefits of using both concurrently. Those benefits were recently detailed in a study conducted by researchers at Colorado State University (CSU).1

What are the benefits of using metronidazole and FortiFlora together? The CSU study demonstrated that administering the SF68 strain along with metronidazole to shelter dogs with diarrhea reduced the needed treatment time from 4.4 to 2.8 days when compared to metronidazole alone. In addition, SF68, a beneficial bacteria, is known to be resistant to metronidazole, so metronidazole doesn’t decrease its effectiveness.

Can FortiFlora be used alone to nutritionally manage dogs and cats with acute diarrhea? FortiFlora can help restore microflora balance and can be used without prescribing antibiotics. Many patients, including my own dogs, can have a history of stress diarrhea. This may be associated with boarding, increased activity levels, traveling or other environmental changes. In these cases, veterinarians may consider putting the patient on FortiFlora prior to the event to reduce the risk of stress diarrhea.

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