

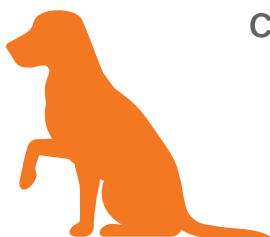
# Exocrine Pancreatic Insufficiency (EPI)

## WHEN TO SUSPECT EPI

**Always consider EPI in chronic GI cases, especially with weight loss.**

### Dogs (classic signs)

- Weight loss despite polyphagia
- Large-volume feces
- Steatorrhea
- Flatulence
- Poor coat quality



### Cats (often subtle)

- Weight loss (most consistent sign)
- Intermittent diarrhea
- Vomiting or lethargy
- Poor coat quality
- Polyphagia uncommon



### KEY CLINICAL INSIGHT

- Clinical signs appear only after >90% pancreatic function loss
- Routine diagnostics are often normal
- High risk of underdiagnosis, especially in cats

### DIAGNOSTIC APPROACH

#### Gold Standard Test: Serum Trypsin-Like Immunoreactivity (TLI)

- Low TLI → Diagnostic for EPI
- Gray zone → Repeat test
- Not affected by enzyme therapy

**Clinical Tip:** Run TLI early in chronic GI workups

#### Alternative (if TLI is unavailable)

**Fecal Pancreatic Elastase (dogs only)** ..... >20 µg/g → EPI unlikely  
 ..... <20 µg/g → Consistent with EPI (interpret with caution)

### COMMONLY MISSED: COBALAMIN DEFICIENCY

- Very common in EPI patients
- Associated with worse outcomes

**Clinical Tip:** Test cobalamin when possible - Supplement if low or unknown

# Exocrine Pancreatic Insufficiency (EPI)

## Clinical Cheat Sheet for Veterinary Practice

### TREATMENT BASICS

#### 1. Pancreatic Enzyme Replacement Therapy (PERT)

##### Average dosage\*

- Dogs: ~1 tsp per cup food per meal
- Cats: ~1 tsp per meal
- Adjust based on response

#### 2. Diet

- Highly digestible, low-residue diet
- Avoid high fiber
- Avoid unnecessarily low-fat diets

#### 3. Cobalamin Supplementation

- Oral or injectable
- Often required long-term



### IF RESPONSE IS POOR

Reassess for:

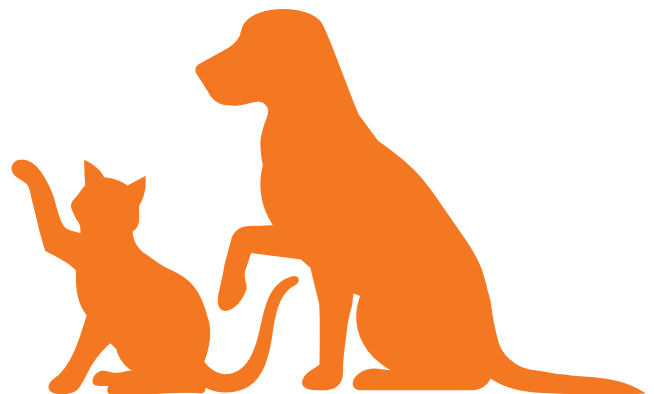
- Incorrect enzyme dosing or product
- Dietary mismatch
- Persistent dysbiosis
- Concurrent chronic enteropathy

### PROGNOSIS

- Generally good with proper management
- Most patients require lifelong therapy

### QUICK CLINICAL REMINDERS

- ✓ Normal bloodwork does NOT rule out EPI
- ✓ Cats rarely show classic signs
- ✓ Test TLI earlier, not last
- ✓ Always consider cobalamin
- ✓ Revisit diagnosis in non-responders



Reference: Cridge H, Williams DA, Barko PC. Exocrine pancreatic insufficiency in dogs and cats. *J Am Vet Med Assoc.* 2023 Nov 9

\*Dosage is dependent on degree of pancreatic insufficiency. Consult the veterinarian regarding meal frequency and dosage adjustments.