

My Pet Has Stopped Eating

Family Matters

Most pets love their food.

So when they suddenly stop eating, it's natural to worry.

But how worried should you be?

The answer depends on **why** they've stopped eating.

At Amity, we believe that a loss of appetite is **a symptom, not a diagnosis**. Our purpose is to **Empower You Through Education**, helping you recognise when a reduced appetite is simply a passing problem and when it could indicate something much more serious.

Why Has My Pet Stopped Eating?

There are many possible reasons.

Some are relatively minor.

Others require urgent veterinary attention.

Common causes include:

- Pain.
- Dental disease.
- Stomach upsets.
- Fever.
- Kidney disease.
- Liver disease.
- Pancreatitis.
- Cancer.
- Stress or anxiety.
- Foreign bodies.
- Certain medications.

The challenge is that many of these conditions can look very similar at first.

That's why our job is to identify **the cause**, not simply encourage your pet to eat.

How Long Can My Pet Go Without Food?

A healthy adult dog missing a single meal is not usually an emergency if they are otherwise bright and behaving normally.

Cats are different.

Cats that stop eating, particularly if they are overweight, can develop a serious condition called **hepatic lipidosis (fatty liver disease)**. This can occur after only a few days without adequate food intake and can become life-threatening.

Puppies, kittens and pets with existing medical conditions should also be assessed much sooner if they stop eating.

What Should I Look For?

Ask yourself:

- Are they drinking?
- Are they vomiting?
- Do they have diarrhoea?
- Are they quieter than normal?
- Are they struggling to breathe?
- Are they in pain?
- Have they lost weight?
- Have they eaten something unusual?

These observations provide valuable clues and help us decide how urgently your pet needs to be seen.

Should I Tempt Them With Treats?

It's reasonable to offer something highly palatable.

However, if your pet repeatedly refuses favourite foods, don't simply keep offering different meals.

A poor appetite is often your pet's way of telling you that something is wrong.

The goal isn't just to get food into them.

It's to understand **why they don't want to eat**.

What Will My Vet Do?

We'll begin with a thorough history and physical examination.

Depending on what we find, we may recommend:

- Blood tests.
- Urine tests.
- X-rays.
- Ultrasound.
- Hospitalisation if dehydration or more intensive treatment is needed.

Not every pet requires every test.

We'll recommend the investigations that are most likely to identify the cause.

Appetite Is One of the Best Health Indicators

One of the first questions we ask is,

"How's their appetite?"

That's because appetite is one of the best indicators of your pet's overall wellbeing.

A pet that suddenly stops eating is telling us something important.

Our job is to discover what.

At Amity, **Amity Essential Membership includes unlimited health checks**, so if your pet's appetite changes, we'd much rather examine them early than wait until they become more seriously unwell.

Because eating isn't just about nutrition.

It's one of the clearest windows into your pet's health.

Because they're not just your pet.

They're family.

Family Matters.

If you need more information, book an appointment with an Amity vet. We're here to Empower You Through Education and help you become your pet's greatest advocate.