

Balance

Maintaining



When stress unsettles a rescued animal's digestive system, the results can be unpleasant. To see how a nutritional supplement can help restore intestinal balance in dogs and cats, 10 *Rally to Rescue* Ambassadors recently participated in a trial of *Purina Veterinary Diets FortiFlora* brand canine and feline nutritional supplements. The trial was conducted in partnership with the *Rescue Ambassadors'* veterinarians, as FortiFlora is only available upon the advice of a veterinarian and distributed through a veterinarian's office.

Jan Zeich, chairwoman of the Western Irish Setter Club Rescue in Minooka, Ill., gave her 7-year-old Irish Setter, "Fridge," FortiFlora daily for a month. "Fridge has a touchy digestive system," Zeich says. "He has been through three homes. At the last one the owners discovered he had gastric dilatation and volvulus, commonly referred to as bloat.

"In layman's terms, the stomach filled with air and then flipped over on itself, cutting off blood supply to the stomach and nearby organs, without any way to empty the trapped air," she continues. "Fridge was lucky that his then owners, who'd only had him for five days, recognized the problem and rushed him to an emergency clinic where he had surgery to untwist his stomach."

Now living with Zeich, the Irish Setter has benefited from FortiFlora. "He has not

Jan Zeich participated in the *Purina Veterinary Diets FortiFlora* trial with "Fridge," her 7-year-old Irish Setter.

Nutritional Supplement Benefits Dogs & Cats with Diarrhea

Purina Veterinary Diets® FortiFlora® brand canine and feline nutritional supplement, which is available exclusively from veterinarians, provides dietary management of dogs and cats with diarrhea.

The nutritional supplement is particularly helpful in treating:

- Stressful situations, such as boarding or change in home environment;
- Diet change or consumption of inappropriate foods;
- Soft stools in puppies and kittens; and
- Antibiotic therapy.

Introduced in 2006, FortiFlora contains *Enterococcus faecium* SF68, a live beneficial probiotic, or bacteria, which has been shown to promote intestinal health and balance in dogs and cats.

SF68 works by increasing the number of beneficial bacteria, which helps to protect the intestine from harmful bacteria. The intestinal tract of dogs and cats is home to thousands of different

types of bacteria, both beneficial and harmful. In a healthy dog or cat, these bacteria are in balance, and the beneficial bacteria help to protect the intestine from harmful bacteria. In dogs and cats with diarrhea, the normal balance of bacteria in the intestine is upset, often contributing to the problem and prolonging the recovery period.

FortiFlora with SF68 offers a way to re-establish normal intestinal balance and also promote a healthy immune system.



been waking me in the night anymore,” Zeich says, with a laugh. “Fridge has not had issues with diarrhea or gas since soon after we started giving him FortiFlora.”

Nutritional scientists at Purina studied the effects of a probiotic, or live beneficial bacteria, to determine its usefulness in the diets of dogs and cats. FortiFlora is very palatable, and it’s easy to give by

sprinkling on the pet’s food.

Animals, like people, respond to stress. Rescued dogs and cats especially endure these difficulties while homeless, transitioning during rescue, and establishing routines in new homes.

Purina Research Nutritionist Gail Czarnecki-Maulden, Ph.D., describes the science behind intestinal upset in dogs

and cats. “More than 1 billion bacteria are contained in one teaspoon of stool,” she says. “These bacteria, known as microflora, are essential for a healthy, stable intestinal tract and healthy immune system. Beneficial bacteria provide nutrients for intestinal cells, promote absorption of nutrients, and create a healthy intestinal environment and immune system.”

A community of bacteria resides in the intestinal tract, consisting of a balance of beneficial and potentially harmful microflora. This community, or microbiome, is established early in a dog’s or cat’s life. Disruption of the microbiome can result in upset or diarrhea.

“Stress, travel, aging, environmental changes and even long-term antibiotic therapy can disturb the balance of microflora within the microbiome,” Czarnecki-Maulden explains. “Probiotics help to restore and maintain the balance during these times of stress.”

Research Verifies Benefits

Numerous studies showed probiotics have benefits in humans and livestock. Physicians prescribe probiotics to help establish a healthy microflora balance in infants, treat acute and chronic diarrhea, and prevent traveler’s diarrhea. Few studies had evaluated probiotic value for dogs until



Jacquie Howell of Saving Animals from Euthanasia gave “Bob,” a brown tabby, FortiFlora, a nutritional supplement provided by a veterinarian to help restore intestinal balance.

Purina conducted three studies, two of them researching the benefits for puppies and one evaluating benefits for older dogs.

"The puppies given the probiotic had more stable microflora patterns than those fed the control food," says Czarnecki-Maulden. "This was reflected in better fecal quality throughout growth." The research indicated that supplementing their diets with FortiFlora promotes intestinal health and balance in growing puppies and adults.

FortiFlora also has been shown to benefit cats. Jacque Howell, director and medical director of Saving Animals from Euthanasia (SAFE), in Tucson, Ariz., participated in the trial with two cats — Babbit, a female Siamese mix, and Bob, a brown tabby.

"We went to a veterinarian who prescribed antibiotics for both cats, but they were not correcting their problems with diarrhea," says Howell. "Then we tried FortiFlora and the diarrhea improved. The issues were resolved within 10 days."

Howell supplemented the cats' daily diets with the probiotic for 11 more days. Understanding the finicky nature of felines, Howell also gauged the success of the trial by the cats' behaviors, especially at feeding time. "There was no turning up their heads," she says. "They went right for the food. They loved it."

"Babbit and Bob started eating better and gaining back weight they'd lost when they weren't feeling well. They became much more alert and playful. They were back to their normal behaviors."

Sometimes when welcoming a rescued animal into a new home, understanding the issues that cause intestinal upset can be elusive. When Lisa Haynes, director of Save Our Strays Association in Huntington, Vt., recently met "Nicholas," a 1-year-old Saint Bernard, he had diarrhea. Rescued from a puppy mill, Nicholas was placed into foster care. It may not have been easy to estimate the stress he felt, but the evidence seemed a little clearer after

Haynes started adding FortiFlora to Nicholas' diet. A foreign substance Haynes describes as "cloth," perhaps a sock or rag, eventually emerged with the dog's diarrhea.

"Six days into the trial, he passed the cloth and we figured that was the big problem," says Haynes. "We gave him FortiFlora for four more days, and then stopped supplementing his *Purina Pro Plan* dog food with it. Within a couple of days, he was having diarrhea again. We restarted giving FortiFlora, and by the 15th day of the second go-round, his issues were fully resolved."

Nicholas was adopted days later, and Haynes sent FortiFlora with him for his family to continue feeding during the adjustment period to his new home. "We didn't want him to have a fallback," she says. "We've followed up with his adoptive family, and they tell us that Nicholas has been doing just fine. No issues." ♦



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When your dog feels good, you know it. But when his digestive system is out of balance, it can lead to intestinal problems such as diarrhea. FortiFlora® is the proven nutritional supplement with probiotics and guaranteed levels of live, active cultures to help restore intestinal flora. FortiFlora tastes great and it's easy to use too— just sprinkle it on your dog's food. Because when you take care of your dog's belly, you're taking care of your dog. FortiFlora is available exclusively through your veterinarian. For more information, call 1-800-879-1266 or visit www.fortiflora.com.



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