

Dear Dr. Wise,

Question: We are concerned about Tara, our two-year-old Alaskan malamute. Several times a week she begins to drool and then vomits a small amount of yellow liquid. This happens first thing in the morning and sometimes causes her to have a poor appetite that morning. We never seem to notice her vomiting at night and her activity and attitude in general is very good. Is there something seriously wrong with her or is it ok as long as she eats later in the day?

Answer: How many times a day does she eat and when is her last meal of the day? This is important because it's possible she cannot handle having a completely empty stomach which would explain why she only vomits first thing in the morning. Her drooling may be caused by the reflux of stomach "juices" into her esophagus. This may irritate the esophagus and cause her to vomit. The gastric acids, pepsin, and bile salts usually found in the yellow liquid probably are causing some mild damage to her esophageal wall and leaving her feeling like she doesn't want to eat in the morning.

My suggestion would be if you are not already doing so is to feed her twice a day and give her evening meal a couple of hours before she goes to bed. Most dogs, especially large breeds predisposed to bloat, should be eating twice a day. Try this change in feeding schedule and consult your veterinarian should the problem persists. If the problem persists, your veterinarian will recommend diagnostic tests to determine the cause of the vomiting.

Hopefully it is just a matter of not letting her stomach get empty and upset. Again, please consult your veterinarian if this method does not resolve the problem.

If you have a question, write Dr. Wise, Indiana Veterinary Medical Association, 201 S. Capitol Avenue, Suite 405, Indianapolis, IN, 46225, or [www.invma.org](http://www.invma.org).