



Why Does My Pet Eat Rocks?

Many dogs tend to eat a lot of strange things that, for most of us, make no sense, from socks to tampons, we have seen it all. Sometimes, there is no cause for alarm, especially if they are just chewing and not actually swallowing. But when they do start to swallow, it is cause for concern and can be very dangerous depending on the item ingested.

Chewing rocks is dangerous to a dog's mouth and teeth. Sharp edges can cut delicate gums and tongues, and crunching down can break teeth. Additionally, swallowing rocks can lead to vomiting, diarrhoea, intestinal blockage, and even choking if the rock is too large for the dog's throat. As common as rock chewing is, it can be due to several possibilities ranging from medical to developmental.

1. To seek attention. Chewing rocks is one way for dog to get noticed. In this case, your dog may be acting out as they are anxious or just plain bored.
2. Medical problems. Underlying medical condition can also be the cause of strange eating behaviour. These can include:
 - Immune mediated haemolytic anaemia (IMHA)
 - Iron deficiency
 - Anaemia
 - Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD)
 - Hookworm or intestinal parasites
 - Stomach tumour
 - Hyperthyroidism
 - Diabetes mellitus
 - Malnutrition
 - Unbalanced diet

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It is vital to rule out any medical cause by having a veterinarian consultation.

If your pet is just bored, and that is the cause behind the rock eating, here are a few tips to possibly change their habits!

1. Eliminate the access to the rocks. Sometimes it's just impossible to avoid rocks altogether, but try to supervise your dog when they're around.
2. When you catch your dog eating rocks, distract them from the rocks by redirecting their attention.
3. Check your own schedule. Is your dog left alone much of the time? Consider doggy daycares or take them on long walks to tire them out.
4. Keep a lot of chew toys on hand, and rotate them every couple of days to keep them interested.

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