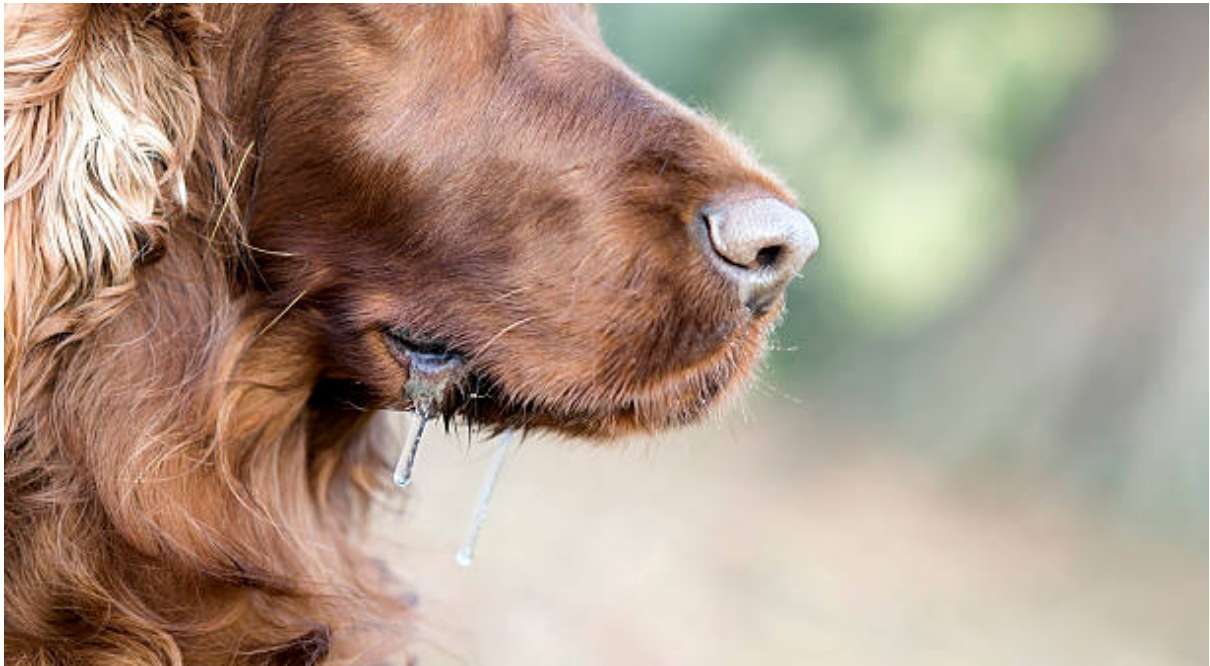


Why Does My Dog Drool While Sleeping? Causes & What to Do

Meta Description: Learn why dogs drool while sleeping, when it's normal versus concerning, and how tips to support your dog's overall wellness naturally today.



Alt text: A dog drooling.

Key Takeaways

- Most sleep drooling in dogs is completely normal and happens due to relaxed facial muscles and dreaming.
- Brachycephalic breeds like Bulldogs and Boxers naturally drool more during sleep due to their facial structure.
- Sudden or excessive drooling while sleeping could indicate dental issues, oral injuries, or more serious health conditions.
- Monitoring patterns of drooling and looking for accompanying symptoms helps determine when veterinary care is needed.
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Why Your Dog Drools in Their Sleep: Normal vs. Concerning

Most sleep drooling in dogs is perfectly normal and nothing to worry about. Just like humans might occasionally drool during deep sleep, dogs experience the same physiological response when their muscles relax. This relaxation means they're less likely to swallow saliva automatically, allowing it to pool and eventually leak from their mouth.

However, there's an important distinction between normal, occasional drooling and excessive or sudden drooling during sleep. If your dog has always been a sleep drooler, especially if they're a breed prone to drooling like Saint Bernards or Newfoundlands, there's likely no cause for concern.

The concern arises when a dog who rarely drools suddenly starts producing excessive saliva during sleep, or when the drooling is accompanied by other symptoms like difficulty breathing, pawing at the mouth, or unusual lethargy upon waking.

Changes in drooling patterns can sometimes indicate underlying health issues ranging from dental problems to more serious conditions that require veterinary attention. Being observant of your dog's normal behavior helps you recognize when something might be amiss.

Common Causes of Dog Drooling During Sleep



Caption: Most causes of drooling in dogs are benign and related to your dog's physiology or sleeping position, but some might warrant closer monitoring.

Alt text: Dog drooling.

Normal vs. Concerning Sleep Drooling in Dogs

Recognizing the difference between normal and concerning sleep drooling can help you determine when veterinary attention may be needed:

- **Normal:** Occasional [drooling](#) is typical, especially in drool-prone breeds, and usually happens during deep sleep phases when your dog acts completely normal upon waking.
- **Concerning:** You should be concerned if there's a sudden onset of heavy drooling, especially when it's accompanied by bad breath, pawing at the mouth, or difficulty eating, or if the drool appears bloody or discolored and the excessive drooling continues when your dog is awake.

Relaxed Facial Muscles Allow Saliva to Escape

The primary reason for sleep drooling is simple muscle relaxation. When your dog enters deeper sleep stages, the muscles in their face, jaw, and throat naturally relax.

This relaxation means they're less active in swallowing saliva that continuously forms in their mouth. Without the regular swallowing reflex keeping things in check, saliva pools and eventually overflows from the sides of their mouth.

Your dog's sleeping position can also significantly influence drooling. Dogs who sleep on their sides or with their heads tilted downward are more likely to drool because gravity helps the saliva find its way out.

You might notice your pup drools more when they're in particularly comfortable positions or during especially deep sleep after vigorous exercise or play.

Dreams & REM Sleep Stimulate Saliva Production

Just like humans, dogs experience REM (Rapid Eye Movement) sleep, the phase where dreams occur. During these vivid dreams, your dog might imagine chasing squirrels, playing with favorite toys, or even enjoying a delicious meal.

These dream scenarios can actually trigger increased saliva production as their brain responds to the imagined stimuli, particularly if they're dreaming about food.

You might notice your dog's lips twitching, paws moving as if running, or even small vocalizations during REM sleep. These active dream states often coincide with periods of increased drooling.

It's a completely natural physiological response and can even be quite endearing to witness your pet's dream adventures manifesting in these small physical reactions.

Natural Drooling in Brachycephalic & Jowly Breeds



Caption: Breeds with flat faces or prominent jowls naturally drool more during sleep, making this behavior completely normal for these dogs.

Alt text: Bulldog sleeping.

Certain dog breeds are simply more prone to drooling due to their facial structure. Brachycephalic breeds (those with flat faces and short muzzles) like Bulldogs, Pugs, and Boxers often drool more during sleep because their compressed facial anatomy makes it harder to contain saliva within their mouth.

Similarly, breeds with pendulous lips or pronounced jowls, such as Saint Bernards, Mastiffs, and Bloodhounds, naturally allow more saliva to escape, especially when they're relaxed during sleep.

If you have one of these breeds, you've likely already accepted that drool is simply part of the package that comes with your lovable companion. For these dogs, sleep drooling is not only normal but expected. Many owners of drool-prone breeds keep special "drool towels" strategically placed around sleeping areas to manage the moisture.

What to Do When You Notice Excessive Sleep Drooling

1. Check Your Dog's Mouth for Foreign Objects

If you notice sudden excessive drooling while your dog is sleeping, gently examine their mouth when they wake up. Foreign objects like small sticks, bone fragments, or even pieces of toys can become lodged between teeth or embedded in the gums, causing irritation and increased saliva production.

Look for any visible objects, swelling, or injuries inside the mouth and along the gums. Be particularly careful when checking, as an uncomfortable dog might be reluctant to have their mouth examined.

2. Monitor Water Intake & Hydration

Keep track of how much water your dog is drinking compared to their normal habits. Excessive thirst followed by increased drooling can sometimes indicate issues with the kidneys, diabetes, or other systemic conditions.

Conversely, if your dog is drooling but not drinking enough water, they might be experiencing nausea or discomfort that's preventing normal water consumption. Either scenario warrants closer attention and possibly a veterinary consultation.

3. Observe for Additional Symptoms

Drooling rarely occurs as an isolated symptom when there's an underlying health concern. Watch for other changes in your dog's behavior or physical condition that might accompany the excessive drooling:

- Behavioral changes like reluctance to eat or drink
- Signs of [pain](#) when touching the face or mouth area
- Unusual odor from the mouth or discolored drool
- Swelling around the face, neck, or under the jaw
- Changes in sleeping patterns or restlessness

4. Clean Drool to Prevent Skin Irritation

While investigating the cause of increased drooling, keep your dog's skin and coat clean. Constant moisture from drool can lead to skin irritation, particularly in breeds with facial folds or wrinkles.

Gently wipe your dog's face, neck, and any skin folds with a soft, damp cloth after sleep periods when drooling occurs.

5. Document When & How Much Drooling Occurs

Keeping a simple log of your dog's drooling episodes can be incredibly valuable for identifying patterns. Note when the drooling occurs, how much drool is produced, and what activities preceded the sleep session.

This information can help determine if the drooling is triggered by specific factors like certain foods, medications, or activities.

6. Schedule a Veterinary Examination

If your dog's sleep drooling is sudden, excessive, or accompanied by any concerning symptoms, don't hesitate to consult your veterinarian.

Professional examination is particularly important if you've noticed changes in eating habits, bad breath, or signs of oral discomfort. Dental issues like periodontal disease, broken teeth, or oral tumors are common causes of excessive drooling that require proper treatment.

Support Your Dog's Comfort Naturally

If your dog drools while sleeping, it's often harmless—but it can also signal dental issues, nausea, or stress. Keeping up with regular vet checkups, providing plenty of hydration, and maintaining a comfortable sleep environment can all help.

You can also explore gentle wellness support, such as [veterinarian-approved supplements](#) formulated to promote calmness, comfort, and overall balance. Natural ingredients and quality sourcing matter, so always choose products tested for safety and purity.

A little extra care can go a long way in helping your dog rest easy and feel their best every day.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Can puppies drool more than adult dogs while sleeping?

Yes, puppies often drool more than adult dogs while sleeping. This increased drooling is related to teething, which usually occurs between 3–7 months of age. During this developmental stage, puppies experience gum inflammation and discomfort as their adult teeth erupt, stimulating additional saliva production.

Puppies also tend to sleep more deeply than adult dogs, allowing their facial muscles to completely relax. As long as your puppy is otherwise healthy, eating normally, and developing properly, this increased sleep drooling should gradually decrease as they mature.

Is it normal for dogs to drool more after exercise or playtime?

Increased drooling after exercise or intense play is completely normal for many dogs. During physical activity, dogs pant to regulate their body temperature, and this open-mouth breathing can sometimes lead to more visible drooling, especially when they settle down to sleep afterward.

The combination of physical fatigue, deeper sleep, and the lingering effects of increased respiration all contribute to more noticeable drooling in the post-exercise nap. As long as your dog cools down properly after exercise and shows no signs of heat stress, this post-play drooling is no cause for concern.

Could seasonal allergies cause my dog to drool while sleeping?

Seasonal allergies can indeed contribute to increased drooling during sleep in dogs. When dogs suffer from environmental allergies to pollen, grass, or other seasonal triggers, they often experience inflammation of the mucous membranes throughout their respiratory system, including their mouths and throats.

This inflammation can stimulate excess saliva production that becomes more noticeable during sleep when swallowing reflexes are diminished. If you notice your dog's drooling

patterns change with the seasons, particularly if accompanied by other allergy symptoms, consult your veterinarian about appropriate allergy management strategies.

Why does my senior dog suddenly drool in their sleep when they never did before?

New-onset drooling in senior dogs often signals age-related health changes that warrant veterinary attention. Dental disease is particularly common in older dogs and frequently causes increased salivation. Tooth infections, gum disease, or oral tumors can all lead to sudden drooling during sleep.

Beyond dental issues, senior dogs may develop conditions like kidney disease, liver problems, or gastrointestinal disorders that can affect saliva production. Because sudden changes in drooling patterns in older dogs often indicate underlying health issues, it's important to have your senior pet examined by a veterinarian.

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