

## Decrease in Temperature

On the 50th day of gestation, we recommend taking your pet's temperature at least thrice a day (morning, noon and night). This gives you a baseline of their body temperature at specific times of the day.

Should their body temperature drop 1-2 °C from normal, it is very likely they are about to go into labor. For example, a dog with regular body temp at noon of 39 °C is now at 37.5 °C at the same time of the day is likely to go into labor soon. However, the same dog's temperature at 4 am at 37.5 °C does not necessarily mean it will go into labor soon. It may be the cold ambient temperature causing the drop in body temperature and may not be connected to an upcoming labor. It is important to correlate pet's current body temperature results to your pet's baseline body temperatures.

## Vaginal Secretions

Some pets may exhibit vaginal secretions as early as 1 week before labor. Secretions commonly increase right before labor.

## Panting

Expecting mothers commonly become uncomfortable and will start to pant continuously. This often freaks out pet owners fearing the pet is in too much distress or may have a problem breathing.

## Vomiting

This is not uncommon when labor is near. This is due to the deferred symptoms of the contractions of the uterus to the gastrointestinal tract.

## Frequent urination

It is common for expecting pets to squat as if to urinate but may or may not produce urine.

## Mild to apparent contractions

Finally, you will see contractions of the abdominal muscles once labor has started. The pet may look like she is trying to defecate (as if constipated) when they are actually contractions indicating the start of labor.

## WHEN SHOULD I START TO WORRY?

If you have had your pet undergo pre-natal check-up, then our vets would have advised you as to the risks of your pet possibly needing a C-section. Should patient be in the HIGH RISK bracket, then it is best to have pre-anesthetic panels done before labor while proceeding to the clinic shortly after the start of labor for full veterinary whelping assistance.

Pendragon Veterinary Clinic generally prefers less invasive and conservative approach to treatment, at no risk to the patient, of course. Thus, our staff will attempt a normal delivery before calling for an emergency C-section. Close monitoring of your expecting pet is done through regular vitals, internal exams, x-rays and ultrasounds. Should there be any indications that the fetus/es is/are at risk, an emergency C-section is declared. Otherwise, normal delivery attempt is still preferred. If your pet is not a high candidate for emergency C-section, we give pet owners the option to do a "home delivery". Whelping is a simple process that can be easily done at home provided the pet owner is prepared and knows what the pet is going through but remember to get pre-natal check-ups done to assess that home delivery is safe.

## WHEN CAN I MANAGE AT HOME AND WHEN SHOULD I BRING HER INTO THE CLINIC?

In general, a bitch or queen who has just started contractions will have long intervals in between with increasing frequency. Once regular contractions are noted (every few seconds), the first puppy or kitten must ideally be born within 2 hours. If no pup/kitten is born within that time frame, bringing your pet to the clinic is recommended.

NOTE: The 2-hour interval is merely a guide. It does not necessarily mean a C-section is in order. Again, it is advisable to monitor both the mother and her unborn fetus/es before a C-section. Basically, if your pet takes too long to give birth, it may be best to have medical professionals intervene. In cases where the patient has undergone C-section before, or where the patient is immature, it is always best to have whelping done in the clinic.

In summary, just like with humans, **PRE-NATAL CHECK-UPS ARE ESSENTIAL** to ensure the health of the mother and the unborn babies and a safe delivery.

For convenience, you can schedule pre-natal check-ups via **Pendragon Mobile App. (Download app from Google Play or for IOS, from App Store)**

For information on whelping method and techniques, check out video at [www.pendragonvet.com](http://www.pendragonvet.com)



## PENDRAGON ANIMAL HEALTH GROUP

G/F 107-A Amarencia Bldg. Kalayaan Ave. Diliman, Quezon City

(02) 4363833, 0923-261497

[admin@pendragonvet.com](mailto:admin@pendragonvet.com)

[www.pendragonvet.com](http://www.pendragonvet.com)

[www.fb.com/PendragonvetPage](https://www.facebook.com/PendragonvetPage)

# UTERINE NECROSIS DURING WHELPING

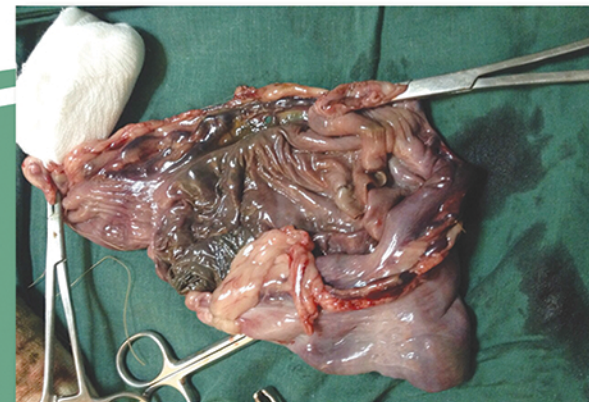
Warning: This flyer contains graphic images.

## EVER WONDERED WHAT COULD HAPPEN IF YOUR PET GOES INTO LABOR TOO LONG?



**Although most dogs and cats are able to give birth naturally, some may have problems along the way.**

For instance, a patient came into Pendragon where the pups were pronounced dead on ultrasound. The patient had been in labor for 24 hours and was tired and was no longer contracting its uterus. An emergency c-section was done to save the life of the already very tired mother.



What we did not expect was to find the uterus so damaged that necrosis had already started to set in.

Our surgeons had little option but to remove the uterus, or risk sepsis. (life-threatening complication due to severe infection). Luckily, this patient recovered beautifully after surgery. Unfortunately this is not always the case and some exhausted mothers may not make it through the surgery.



## WHY SHOULD PET OWNERS NOT SKIP OR SCRIMP ON PRE-NATAL CHECK UPS FOR EXPECTING PETS?

Vets will usually recommend an ultrasound or an x-ray or both to assess the state of developing fetus.

### ULTRASOUND

This helps us determine whether the babies are proceeding normally in their development. If results show they are underdeveloped for a specific stage of the gestation, supplements and proper nutrition for the mother will be advised.

In some cases, a mother may have been pregnant but has had a terminated pregnancy. In such cases, the aborting mother may need medications to prevent infection or conditions such as pyometra (life-threatening uterine infection).

### XRAY

This enables us to assess if babies are growing too fast for the current gestational period (although ultrasound may also show this at times). In such cases, you may be advised to adjust feeding and supplements being given.

X-rays are especially useful during the last week of gestation as this gives doctors a chance to assess the risk of a C-section and prepare for the procedure once the bitch or queen goes into labor. It also alerts both the owner and the vet that they should not wait too long once the pet is in labor.

Some pet owners may also prefer to have a count of the number of pups or kittens they are expecting but they must be aware that there are limitations to doing an actual count.

## COUNTS ARE NEVER 100% ACCURATE.



## WHICH IS PREFERRED FOR DOING COUNTS?

At Pendragon, X-rays are the preferred diagnostic tool for doing counts. Although counts may also be done via ultrasound, the movements of the pups and pregnant pet sometimes make it more difficult. Counts via ultrasound are preferred during the 25-30 day period of gestation.

## HOW EARLY CAN ULTRASOUND BE DONE?

As early as 18 days into the gestation, preferably 18 days from the last date of mating but the standard is usually 21 days.

However, a positive result on ultrasound on the 21st day does not guarantee that your pet will go into full term. Re-absorption of the embryos or fetus may occur at any time before skeletal formation.

We often hear complaints from some pet owners stating that the vet they went to was incompetent at doing ultrasound because they were told that their pet was pregnant at 3 weeks of gestation but the bitch or queen never gives birth.

It is possible that the pet was indeed pregnant at 3 weeks of gestation, however, the fetus may have been re-absorbed due to disease, stress, poor nutrition or management. For this reason, Pendragon generally recommends succeeding pre-natal check-ups to ensure the health of the unborn fetuses.

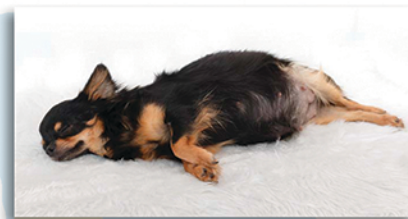
## HOW SOON CAN AN X-RAY BE DONE?

Skeletal formation of a fetus usually occurs at 45 days of gestation. It is at this stage that we can be fully assured that your pet is pregnant and if pregnancy is terminated, visible signs of an abortion should be apparent.

While for pets going through an abortion before skeletal formation, sometimes no symptoms are seen at all.

*Over all, it is always best to be prepared. Pre-natal check-ups can save not just one life... but a whole litter.*

## PREPARING FOR YOUR EXPECTING PET



## HOW LONG IS A DOG/CAT'S GESTATION?

**DOGS - USUALLY 63 PLUS/MINUS 5 DAYS.**  
**CATS - USUALLY 60 PLUS/MINUS 5 DAYS.**

If you are preparing for your pet to give birth, we recommend being prepared by the 56th day for dogs and as soon as the 53rd day for cats.

## WHAT DO I LOOK FOR TO KNOW THAT MY PET IS ABOUT TO GIVE BIRTH?

There are a number of observable symptoms we advise pet owners to watch out for as early as the 50th day of gestation.

### ○ Nesting Behavior

The mother will often try to find the most secluded and darkest area of the house wherein she feels safe to give birth. (i.e., under the bed, in a dim corner, etc.)

### ○ Decreased or No appetite

Expecting queens and bitches usually lose appetite 24-48 hours before giving birth. Although this is not always the case in all pregnant pets.

### ○ Pendulous Abdomen

Most nearing labor will increasingly show a drop in their abdominal area. This happens as early as 7 days before labor.

### ○ Milk Letdown

Milk production may occur as early as 6 weeks into gestation while some may show increase in milk production on the last week of gestation. It is common to see high milk yield as the "big day" approaches. During these times, you may see milk starting to drop from the nipples spontaneously or you can pinch on the mammary glands and see a steady stream or squirting of milk as you do this.