

Abshier-Meuth Animal Hospital
8536 Hwy 146
Baytown, Tx 77523
(281) 383-3254

Animal Medical Center of Baytown
4601 North Main
Baytown, Tx 77521
(281) 422-2821

Whelping Information

Your bitch's anticipated due date is _____ .

Seven (7) days before this date start taking the bitch's temperature rectally 3 times a day. Purchase a human rectal thermometer specifically for this purpose from any drug store.

To take the temperature

1. Apply small amount of petroleum jelly or lubricant to the tip of the thermometer.
2. Insert thermometer until wide part is at rectum.
3. Push button on the thermometer.
4. Remove when the thermometer beeps.
5. Record the temperature.

The temperature drops gradually. It is usually higher in the afternoon due to muscle activity.

A temperature reading of 98.5°F to 99.0°F indicates that whelping can occur at anytime. The temperature will rise to normal just before any puppies are delivered.

Signs of potential problems

1. Black, red or green vaginal discharge before any puppies are born.
2. Hard straining for 4 hours with no puppy being delivered.
3. Longer than 2 hours between puppies (X-rays should have been taken to give estimated number of puppies the bitch is carrying).
4. Any other concerns you might have that things are not progressing normally during labor.

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Care of Newborn Puppies

General information

During the first few weeks of the newborn's life, the mother provides the necessities of warmth, nutrition and stimulation. The owner's responsibilities consist of careful observation to detect problems before they become serious.

Warmth: Room temperature should be at least 70°F. The puppies should be kept off cold floors because chilling can be fatal to young puppies.

Nursing: A well-fed, healthy puppy has a round stomach and seems content. Notify the doctor if the puppies seem uneasy or cry frequently.

Crying: Extended crying is usually a sign of trouble and should be reported to the doctor immediately.

Tail docking / dewclaw removal: Puppies of breeds in which these procedures are done should be presented at 3-7 days of age.

Eyes: The puppies' eyes should open at 10-14 days of age.

Weaning: At about 4 weeks of age, pan feeding of milk replacement formula may be started. Dry puppy foods may then gradually be added. **Recommended weaning diet:** _____

Worms: A stool specimen should be brought to the office for laboratory examination when the puppies are 2 weeks old. Special instructions: _____

Vaccinations: A series of immunizations should begin at 6 weeks of age. The doctor will recommend a schedule for the appropriate vaccinations.

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Care of the Bitch After Whelping

General information

Pregnancy and nursing puppies constitute a severe strain on the mother's health. Though most mothers handle the task admirably, the wise owner can take certain precautions to protect the health of both mother and puppies.

Important points in postnatal care

Physical examination: Within 48 hours after birth the mother and puppies should be examined by a veterinarian.

Diet: Feed quality puppy food to the mother until puppies are completely weaned, feeding twice daily.

Fluids: Provide clean, fresh water at all times

Activity: Ordinarily, the mother will spend most of the first 3 weeks with her puppies. Allow her as much exercise as she desires.

Bowel movements: Due to increased food consumption and the enlarged uterus, the mother may have to relieve herself more frequently. The stools may be soft for the first few days. If diarrhea or straining develops, call the doctor.

Mammary gland care: Check the nipples daily and clean with warm water if dried milk begins to accumulate. Inform the doctor of any discoloration of the skin, swelling, tenderness or sores. Trim the puppies' nails if they are scratching the mammary glands.