



Prostate Disease information sheet Martin and Carr.

What is the prostate?

The prostate is a gland found only in the male animal, though in the castrated male animal it generally shrinks to nothing over time. It is found at the 'neck' of the bladder, sitting between the bladder and the rectum.

What symptoms may indicate prostate disease?

Sometimes no symptoms may be obvious. However common symptoms would be :

- Blood /bloody fluid dripping from the penis
- Pain or straining when going to the toilet
- Reduced speed/flow of urine during urination
- Flattened/mis shaped faeces

What are the different types of prostate disease?

Although not an exhaustive list the following can affect the prostate.

- Benign hypertrophy----this is a swelling of the prostate that is common in older uncastrated dogs, and is often nothing to worry about. If severe the treatment is either castration or 'chemical' castration using drugs.
- Bacterial prostatitis----this is a very painful condition often making the patient really poorly. It can lead to abscesses within the prostate that may require surgical drainage.
- Para prostatic cyst disease----large fluid filled cysts can form around the prostate and can become hardened with calcium deposits. Most commonly these are detected with the aid of ultrasonography.
- Prostatic tumours----the commonest being prostatic carcinoma. Prostatic carcinoma can occur in castrated dogs AND uncastrated dogs. They are not

usually painful, but extremely serious as they often spread into the lungs and other tissues.

After an examination my vet has suggested some tests to do with the prostate. Can you explain what these may be?

The prostate can be palpated rectally in most dogs and this is often the first test your vet will perform if he/she suspects prostate disease.

Ultrasonography is extremely useful, as the scan allows the vet to see into the prostate and outline it without open surgery. The scan lets the vet see tissue abnormalities and abnormal build up of fluids etc BUT the scan cannot always differentiate the types of prostate disease. For this either a wash from the prostate is needed, or a fine needle aspirate may be suggested.

What is a fine needle aspirate?

A fine needle aspirate is a tiny biopsy sample collected usually under ultrasound guidance and digital palpation, with a very small needle. The sample is put onto a glass slide and submitted to a pathologist who can look at the cells and decide what sort of disease is affecting the prostate.

Can you treat prostate disease?

It is critical first to diagnose what is the particular disease affecting the prostate.

Castration is often necessary in the treatment of prostate disease in the dog. Most often if the dog has not been castrated this will be suggested as taking away the source of male hormones makes the prostate shrink down and produce less secretions.

With the exception of prostatic carcinoma the diseases listed above are quite responsive to treatment..

Antibiotics penetrate the prostate well, but certain antibiotics are much better suited than others, namely a group called the fluoroquinolones.

Pain killers may be given if necessary.

On occasion major surgery may be needed to drain prostatic abscesses and para prostatic cysts, these operations are complicated and not without risk, however often the end results are good.

