



PYOMETRA

Introduction

Pyometra is a life-threatening infection of the womb (uterus). It is a common disease affecting un-spayed female dogs, normally over six years old. It occurs between 5 and 80 days after a season and is usually seen in animals that have not had puppies. During a season, the hormonal changes that occur make it more difficult for the womb to fight off infection. The infection builds up so that the womb becomes full of pus and toxins are released.

Pyometra can cause lots of signs including:

- Lethargy
- Vomiting
- Drinking more than usual
- Urinating more than usual
- A high temperature, occasionally
- Pus around the vulva (but this does not always occur)
- The abdomen is enlarged

An open pyometra -

This is the name given when pus can be seen coming from the vulva.

A closed pyometra -

This is the name given when pus is not seen from the vulva. These cases can be difficult to diagnose and can be more serious as the pressure inside the womb is not released.

Treatment

The treatment of choice for a pyometra is emergency surgery to remove the uterus and ovaries. The womb is fragile and there is a concern that it may tear. However, if spotted early enough, surgery is usually successful.

Before surgery your vet may perform an ultrasound or an x-ray to confirm the diagnosis. In dogs with a pyometra, the womb becomes enlarged like a balloon, which can be detected.

Your vet is likely to perform blood tests. Pyometra can cause many complications such as kidney failure, liver damage, dehydration, septic shock, low blood sugar and anaemia. Your vet will want to see if there are any signs of these before surgery.

Your dog is likely to be put on a drip. This is to provide fluids, antibiotics and pain killers as quickly as possible. Fluids are needed to try to counteract shock, to reduce dehydration, to help the kidneys and to make to anaesthetic safer.