



VETERINARY REPRODUCTION SPECIALIST AND INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE

Canine Whelping Guide

NUTRITION FOR MOM

- Plan on transitioning/adding foods that will provide nutrition for gestation and lactation needs
- Increase the amount of caloric/nutritional intake for mom, without her becoming overweight
- Royal Canin has a balanced diet for in-stage pregnancy, whelping, lactation, and for the puppies' first diet. --> This diet is called: Starter Mother & Babydog Mousse (wet/canned) and Starter Mother and Babydog Dry Dog Food (available in mini and maxi dry formula)
- They also offer an exclusive promotional program for breeders, you can sign up for that through the royal canine website



SIGNS OF LABOR WITHIN 24 HOURS OF PARTURITION

Temperature

- Drop in rectal temperature greater than 2°F or down below 99°F
- Measure twice daily, no more, and try to measure at the same times each day

Behavior

- Nesting
- Restlessness
- Increased frequency of urination
- Decreased appetite

Body

- Swollen vulva
- Mammary development
- Milk production

STAGES OF LABOR

Stage I

- May last 12 hours
- Intermittent uterine contractions (visible) without abdominal straining
- Panting, rearranging bedding, shivering, occasionally vomiting, restless
- Some may show no behavioral signs

Stage II

- Visible abdominal straining
- Vaginal discharge may be seen
- The interval between pups can vary -- usually, a pup is delivered every 30-60 minutes. For example: with 7 puppies, labor may take upwards of 7 hours

- Do not intervene unless necessary! If disturbed, the mom can voluntarily inhibit labor.
- Puppies and placentas can be passed in any order and may or may not alternate
- Mom may eat placentas so you may never see them

Stage III

- Passage of remaining placentas
- Should have passed last placenta by 4-6 hrs. after birth of the last pup
- After all the puppies, don't forget that mom may want to go outside and urinate!
- Have plenty of fresh water available at all times

WHEN TO CALL FOR LABOR ISSUES

- Green vaginal discharge without passing a puppy or placenta. This can indicate placental separation and the pup's life may be in danger
- More than 2 hours between puppies
- Intense contractions for >30 minutes without delivery of a pup
- Lack of milk production

Balanced Genetics

During Hours: 772-742-1110

After Hours: 772-812-2273

****If for any reason you cannot reach us, please call your nearest emergency clinic for guidance.****



NEONATAL CARE

Immediate Care

- Mom usually resuscitates newborns, licks off fetal membranes, and bites the umbilical cord
- You will want to monitor this because in some cases some bitches may get too overzealous and trim the cords too short or can create an abdominal hernia by obsessively licking the cord area
- Mom will lick puppies to stimulate them and encourage nursing, urination, and defecation
- Intervene if mom shows no interest in 30-60 seconds
- Remove pup from sac if necessary
- Apply gentle steady pressure to tear the umbilical cord. ****Make sure to leave some cord (~1inch) attached to the pup, so as not to tear right next to the abdomen****
- Umbilical stumps can be dipped in iodine to help prevention of infection
- If the pup isn't breathing: Clear all mucous from the airways and try rubbing vigorously with a warm towel and call us for further guidance!

Continued Pup Care - Warming

- Keep the pups warm - Puppies are unable to regulate body temperature until 1-2 weeks of age
- The most important is to provide a temperature gradient so that pups can move away from the warmest area if desired
- A portion of the whelping pen should be heated to 90-93°F for the first two days of life
- Increase temperature to 95° F on day 2, and up to 99° F after days 7-10
- If utilizing heating blankets, be very careful of burning mom or pups - we suggest avoiding heating blankets
- Heating lamps may be used when elevated to the appropriate level - we recommend one that is adjustable and easy to be moved as the puppies grow
- Hot water bottles under blankets or towels can be another effective way to heat the whelping area but must be changed frequently or they will eventually take heat from the puppies causing the opposite of the desired effect



Continued Pup Care - Nursing

- Pups should nurse quickly
- They receive maternal antibodies (immune protection) from colostrum (milk produced for the first ~24 hrs. after whelping)
- Check every few hours to make sure everyone is nursing and warm
- Small pups can get pushed out of the way and kept from nursing adequately - Try placing it on a hind teat near mom's rear legs, which will tend to produce more milk



THE FIRST DAYS TO WEEKS OF LIFE

- Mom and puppies should be checked by a veterinarian within 24-48 hrs. of birth for congenital defects and adequate milk production or any concerns - They can also work with you to schedule health visits, a deworming protocol, and a vaccination schedule
- Puppies should be weighed daily to make sure they are eating and growing adequately
- Puppies may maintain birth weight or even lose weight within the first day of life, after that, they should gain weight each day - Ideal weight gain is an increase of ~10% of body weight each day
- Mom should be given short breaks from the puppies – this gives her a bit of space, the opportunity to urinate and defecate, and allows a chance to check her teats and vulva and clean the whelping area
- **Watch for excessive or foul-smelling vulvar discharge**
- **Watch for painful, swollen, hard, or hot teats and any abnormal discharge**
- Before their eyes open (~2 weeks), puppies should be nursing and sleeping for 90% of the time
- **Happy, healthy puppies are: quiet, warm, consistently gaining weight, twitching in their sleep**



- **Worrisome puppies are: restless, noisy, losing weight, and not twitching in their sleep**
- Puppies are unable to urinate or defecate on their own until ~3 weeks of age - Mom will take care of this by licking their hind ends and stimulating them
- After 3 weeks, bedding will need even more frequent changing
- Pups should be up and walking by 3 weeks of age
- Dewclaw removal or tail docking should be performed within the first week of life if so desired

EMERGENCY VETERINARY CLINICS

Pet Emergency Of Martin County

Dr. Montilla also works in this location
 2239 S Kanner Hwy, Stuart, FL 34994
 772-781-3302 - Open 24 hours

Veterinary Medical Center of St. Lucie County

7790 S US Hwy 1, Port St. Lucie, FL 34952
 772-337-8570 - Open 24 hours

Animal Urgent Care Center

3984 US-1, Fort Pierce, FL 34982
 772-466-3441 - Open 24 hours

Veterinary Specialty Hospital of Palm Beach Gardens

4019 Hood Rd, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410
 561-625-9995 - Open 24 hours

Jupiter Pet Emergency & Specialty Center

505 Commerce Way, Jupiter, FL 33458
 561-741-4041 - Open 24 hours

Pet Emergency and Referral Center

3579 Northlake Blvd, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33403
 561-691-9999 - Open 24 hours