



VETERINARY REPRODUCTION SPECIALIST AND INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE

Mastitis In Dogs And Cats

WHAT IS MASTITIS?

- Mastitis is inflammation of the mammary gland.
- Mastitis can be caused by a number of things, but bacterial infection is the most common. Other causes include trauma to the mammary gland or accumulation of milk.
- Most commonly, mastitis is seen in the postpartum (after birth) period of nursing females.

CLINICAL SIGNS OF MASTITIS - WHAT TO LOOK FOR



Early Stage

- You may see that the pups/kittens are not gaining weight as expected.
- The mammary gland will have slight swelling and inflammation. It can feel firm.

Progression

- The mammary gland will become increasingly swollen, inflamed, discolored (red and purple), and painful.
- The mammary gland will become ulcerated and you will start to see open wounds and scabbing.
- Milk expressed from the affected gland may be bloody, have pus, and be thickened.

Severe

- The animal may start to act ill (fever, lethargy, vomiting, and loss of appetite).
- If the infection has spread to the body, then signs of sepsis will be seen (fever, lethargy, non-responsive, shallow breathing, and so on).

DIAGNOSTICS - CONFIRMING THAT IT IS MASTITIS

- Physical Exam
- Ultrasound of the mammary gland
- Bloodwork - especially a CBC to confirm infection
- Milk cytology to confirm the presence of bacteria and white blood cells
- Bacterial Culture and Sensitivity

TREATMENT - GETTING RID OF MASTITIS

Early Stage

- Antibiotics and pain medication will be prescribed.
- Laser therapy with blue light is also recommended as it can cut healing time in half.



Progression

- Antibiotics and pain medication will be prescribed.
- Laser therapy with blue light is recommended.
- Wound care of the mammary gland may need to be performed by the vet.

Severe

- IV antibiotics and pain medication.
- Surgical removal of necrotic/infected mammary gland.
- Sepsis management by a vet.



COMMON QUESTIONS

Can the pups/kittens still nurse?

- YES, even from the affected gland!
 - It is good for the affected gland to be "drained" and the babies do a great job of that.
- Things to consider though:
 - It may be too painful for mom, thus you may not want the babies nursing.
 - There may be a decrease in milk flow, thus the babies will not get adequate nutrition.
 - Depending on the medications prescribed the babies may not be able to nurse.

Do certain dogs and cats develop mastitis more commonly than others?

- NO
 - Any breed, age, or experience level is at risk for developing mastitis.
- Things to consider though:
 - Smaller litters may mean that mammary glands can become engorged since there are fewer feedings.
 - Large litters may mean that mammary glands stay open longer, thus bacteria have more chances to move in.

PREVENTION METHODS

- Weigh the babies daily
- Check mammary glands daily
 - discoloration, swelling, firmness, temperature, pain response
- Check milk secretion quality daily
 - color and texture
- Keep the environment clean and dry

WHEN TO CALL FOR MASTITIS

- Weigh the babies daily
- Check mammary glands daily
- discoloration, swelling, firmness, temperature, pain response
- Check milk secretion quality daily
- color and texture
- Keep the environment clean and dry

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.



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