

# DURING THE PREGNANCY

## ● **LENGTH OF PREGNANCY?**

Can vary from 56 to 70 days. Average is 63 - 64 days. If nothing has happened by the 65th day, contact the surgery.

## ● **FOOD** - Quality feeding is essential.

HILL'S SCIENCE PLAN is ideal. Use "CANINE ADULT" up to 6 weeks, then change to "CANINE PUPPY" until the pups are weaned.

## ● **EXERCISE** as much as your bitch wishes. Avoid "rough and tumbles" with other dogs.

● **GROOMING** - In late pregnancy your bitch will probably appreciate you helping her keep fresh and clean. Use Wet-Wipes daily to clean her eyes, nose, face, feet, anus and vulva. Groom her gently and encourage her to relax while you do it.

● **AS WHELPING APPROACHES** the vulva will enlarge and the mammary glands will swell with milk.

# THE BIRTH

● **1st STAGE LABOUR** - may last up to 24 hours. If prolonged, contact the surgery. The bitch will be restless, and may try to make a nest.

● **2nd STAGE LABOUR** - Birth of the pups. A greenish discharge may be seen. If nothing has happened two hours after the beginning of straining, contact the surgery. If there is a gap of more than two hours between pups, contact the surgery.

● **3rd STAGE LABOUR** - the afterbirths. Usually one is passed with or after each pup. The bitch usually licks off the membranes and chews through the cord. She often eats the afterbirth, this is O.K.. It may be necessary to help by cleaning the membrane (which looks like a film of polythene) from the pup's face so that it can breathe.

# AFTERCARE

When she has finished whelping, the bitch normally takes a drink, possibly a feed, and will probably sleep. If you have any doubt about whether there are any pups remaining in the bitch - contact the surgery. Discourage friends and children from visiting or handling the pups in the first week of life as this will disturb the bitch, and may pass on infection.

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# *Pregnancy & Whelping in the bitch*

**A litter of pups can bring a load of happiness into your own home!  
Your children will learn all about birth and treasure the memory lifelong.  
Share in the magic of birth ..... but first be sure you can cope!**

## **Before you mate your bitch - ask yourself :-**

1. Have I the space for a lively litter? - especially large breeds.
2. Have I the time? - the litter will take over my life for up to 3 months.
3. Do I accept that there is a small risk to my bitch - pregnancy can occasionally go wrong (caesarian, eclampsia etc)?
4. Can I (and my family) cope with possible puppy deaths, and parting with them as they go to new homes.
5. Have I the money? - overall costs could be £970 - £1350 for correct medical care, special feeding, equipment, extra heating, Kennel Club registration etc.
6. Can I find suitable homes for all the pups?

*If you decide to breed with your bitch  
we're always here to help you.*

- **Any Questions?** We are happy to answer your questions and discuss your concerns.
- **When should you bring your bitch to see the vet?**  
- see inside for a simple healthcare guide to pin on the wall.
- **Emergency Service?**  
- there is a vet on duty 24 hours a day, all year round. Don't hesitate to phone for advice if you meet with a problem.

**TOTAL HEALTH CARE THROUGHOUT LIFE**

**Veterinary Health Centre, Daisy St. Blackburn (01254) 53622**

**David Higginson M.R.C.V.S. John Davies M.R.C.V.S.**

**Sam Purcell M.R.C.V.S.**

## BREEDING WITH YOUR BITCH

### ☐ BEFORE MATING

● **Health Examination by the vet** - including internal examination to check the passage for size or abnormality.

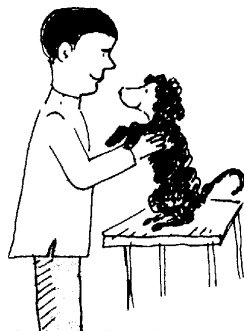
+ check for possible inherited diseases.

● **Booster Vaccination** so your bitch will pass on vaccine protection to her pups.

● **Worming** with MILBEMAX.

● **High Quality Food** - Use HILL'S SCIENCE PLAN ADULT to prepare a bitch for breeding. Using this food there is no need to give any vitamin or mineral supplements.

● **Herpes Vaccination** (optional) - to protect against fading puppy disease.



### ☐ 3 - 4 WEEKS AFTER MATING

● **Health Examination by the vet & Pregnancy Diagnosis** -

In a relaxed bitch, the vet can often feel the pups at 24 to 28 days.

(Later they can't be felt as the uterus becomes softer).

● **Pregnancy Test** (optional) - ask for details

● **High Quality PUPPY Food for the bitch**

- Change to HILL'S SCIENCE PLAN PUPPY. Gradually increase the amount of food offered, and feed 3 - 4 times a day. Feed the bitch on this food until the pups are weaned.

### ☐ 7 - 8 WEEKS AFTER MATING

● **Health Examination by the vet**, including internal examination to check that all is still normal in the passageway.

● **Booster Vaccination** if not done earlier.

● **Worming** with MILBEMAX.

● **Prepare the whelping area** :- You will need several pieces of VETBED, some strong cardboard boxes and lots of clean unused newspapers for use as disposable bedding.

● **Prepare for the birth** :- Get a supply of WELPI puppy milk, and a CATA C FEEDER so you can feed the pups if the bitch has problems.



## WHEN TO SEE THE VET

### ☐ WHELPING - The Birth - see back page

☞ IF YOU ARE IN ANY DOUBT ABOUT PROGRESS  
PHONE THE SURGERY BLACKBURN 01254 53622

● **There is always a vet on duty.** You may phone just for advice if you wish. Should your bitch need attention be prepared to take her to the vet. If possible, have a car and driver "on call" to help you. Be prepared for the possibility of a caesarian and for cost of £900 - £1400. Have credit available.

### ☐ 12HRS - 24HRS AFTER WHELPING

● **Bring your bitch and her pups to the vet for a check-up** - The vet will check she's finished whelping, give her an injection to contract the uterus and return it to normal. Give her a antibiotic injection to prevent infection of the uterus, and check over the pups to detect any birth abnormalities or health problems.

### ☐ PUPS 3 TO 5 DAYS OLD

● **Removal of dew claws by the vet.**

### ☐ PUPS - 3 WEEKS OLD

● **Worm** the bitch with MILBEMAX.

● **Worm** the pups at 2 wks, 4wks, 6wks, 8wks, 12 wks and 16wks, Use PANACUR PASTE or LIQUID up to 6wks then MILBEMAX Tablets.

● **Weaning**: start offering the pups HILL'S SCIENCE PLAN PUPPY.

Crumble the dry food at first to make it easier for the pups.

● **Eclampsia risk for the bitch!** Typically 3 weeks after whelping.

Watch out for twitching or rapid breathing as early signs of convulsions.

### ☐ PUPS - 6 WEEKS OLD

● **Vaccination** - start protection against Parvovirus etc.

● **Ask the vet for a discounted price for vaccinating a litter.**

● **Plan control of the bitch's next season** by the use of the hormone injection DELVOSTERONE, or neutering if not breeding again.

● **Food** - Return the bitch to HILL'S SCIENCE PLAN ADULT.

