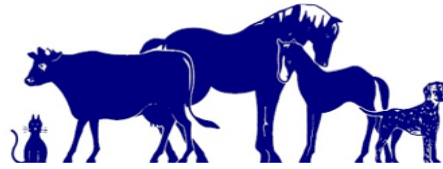


ABN 70 601 832 062



AJ & JL Williams Pty Ltd T/A

WANGARATTA VETERINARY CLINIC

3 Baker St, Wangaratta 3677 Ph (03) 5721 4000 Fax (03) 5722 1269

Friendly service and professional care for all.

Pregnancy and whelping in dogs

If you have decided to breed from your bitch it is important prior to mating to ensure she is healthy and up to date with her vaccinations and worming. Contact the clinic to arrange a health check.

Care of the pregnant bitch:

Feed a good quality balanced diet throughout pregnancy. Increase the amount of food your bitch gets or change to a puppy food diet in the last 3-4 weeks to ensure adequate nutrition. Bitches should steadily gain weight during pregnancy. They should not lose weight and should not gain too quickly as excess weight can cause problems during whelping. Contact the clinic if your bitch seems unwell during pregnancy.

DO NOT feed a calcium supplement during pregnancy.

The length of pregnancy in bitches is approximately 63 days from the first mating. Pregnancy can be confirmed with an ultrasound from around 28 days or with an x-ray from around 45 days.

Whelping:

There are 3 stages of labor:

- Stage I - dilation of the cervix. This generally lasts 6-24 hours and the bitch will be restless, show nesting behavior and may pant.
- Stage II – delivery of the pup. This usually takes 2-6 hours, depending on the number of pups. There may be intermittent straining for several hours before the first pup comes through. Usually, there is less than an hour between pups. The bitch may rest without any active straining between pups and may even eat and drink.
- Stage III – delivery of the placenta. This usually occurs within 5-15 minutes of each pup.

Constant, continued straining at any time is not normal and you should call us immediately.

If you feel labor has stopped and there are more pups inside, you should **contact us immediately.**

When to Worry!

- Labour does not begin when expected based on the temperature decrease (within 24h of a drop below 37.6C)
- Temperature has returned to normal after a noted drop ≥ 24 h earlier with no signs of labour.

- Vaginal discharge for more than 3 h with no puppy delivered.
- Stage two labour lasts more than 4 h without puppy delivery.
- Fetal membranes or part of a puppy visible for more than 15 min.
- More than 2 h have elapsed between delivery of successive puppies
- The dam shows signs of illness or distress (e.g., biting at the vulval area).
- More than 30 min of strong abdominal contractions without delivery of a puppy
- A substantial amount of green-black discharge prior to delivery of the first fetus. A small amount of green discharge is normal.
- A prominent bloody discharge at any time during labour.

After whelping:

After delivery, continue to feed the bitch a **puppy food diet** to ensure she has enough nutrients and energy to feed the pups. Speak to your vet if you would like to give a calcium supplement. It should not be needed if the bitch is on an appropriate diet.

There are several problems to look out for in the days and weeks after whelping, including infections of the uterus or breast and eclampsia (milk fever). Contact us immediately if your bitch becomes unwell.

Good luck!