



Interesting Case from our web site www.fairfield-vets.co.uk



"Bess" - Border Collie with Pyometra



Molly

The sexual cycle of the bitch is very different to that of humans. Dogs do not experience a menopause and therefore continue to ovulate throughout their life. Dogs will only ovulate once or twice per year.

Consequently, the uterus or womb is under the influence of the hormone progesterone for a considerably longer uninterrupted time than in humans where a "fluctuation" in hormones occurs each month!

The prolonged exposure to the relatively high levels of progesterone has the effect of enlarging the glands that line the uterus and increase fluid production (cystic endometrial hyperplasia). This process will proceed throughout their life until a considerable amount of fluid may be present within the lumen of the uterus. This then often provides the perfect environment for an opportunistic infection to flourish and cause the life threatening condition known as pyometra.

Since most of these processes continue throughout the patient's life unnoticed both patient and owner become blissfully unaware of the hidden danger. So it was with "Bess" who led an enviable and idyllic life aboard a narrow boat (Sneklifter) on the Ashby canal.

At the ripe old age of 13 years her owners had simply assumed that she was getting old preferring to doze and watch the scenery pass by! It was only when the classic symptom of a purulent discharge from her vulva became apparent that she realised she needed urgent veterinary attention.

One of the difficulties with a residence that is constantly on the move is knowing where to go once moored! Recommended to Fairfield by other boat owners she made her way to our surgery and fortunately we were able to successfully operate and remove the diseased womb. Subsequently, her owners have been astonished at the dramatic improvement in her demeanour. Life "on the canal" has taken on a whole new dimension!

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This article is available on the Fairfield Veterinary Centre web site at www.fairfield-vets.co.uk

You won't care how much we know - until you know how much we care