

Managing Females - No C-Sections!

Nothing in this world is more important than improving the life of one of God's creatures. Some of you do not even realize that is what you are doing, but when you manage females, we avoid issues and have happier, more reproductive moms!



C-Sections

When selecting your females, it is important to know that reproduction ease and litter size go hand and hand. We do not set out to get more puppies. We selected away from C-Sections, and even litter numbers came. The mom that has one or two puppies has too much nutrition for them and too much room for the puppies. Puppies help start labor with stress hormones that trigger mom's labor. If you are the only baby in the uterine horn, you have little stress and little reason to hurry up birth. We selected away from C-Sections and soon realized we were also selecting for even litter sizes as those were the moms that had less issues. The goal is to have reproductively healthy dogs. If that means larger litters then that's fine, but the main focus is on easing mom's job at birth. The small litter females went into labor 2 days later than the average litters and the puppies were larger on the small litters, therefore more C-Sections. Understandable as 2 days is a long time when you double your size weekly.

We still had a few C-Sections and the Veterinarians were reporting back Uterine Inertia as a cause. Breeders reported larger litters, tired moms, and moms with a history of being good milkers. With that, we looked at Calcium and the dairy industry on how they managed Calcium to prevent milk fever. Calcium demand is low to birth, then elevates quickly during labor and lactation – both at the same time! If you are low in calcium after giving birth you get milk fever – Eclampsia. Low on calcium during labor, you get ineffective contractions and tired moms that give up – uterine inertia. Having 6 to 8 birthings in a row is hard work especially if contractions are ineffective. Add calcium when labor starts and not before was the solution and if they have a history of C-Section or calcium responsive labor use every few hours until birthing is complete. Give two doses of Breeders' Edge® Oral Cal Plus or injectable Calcium Gluconate, 2 hours apart and repeat when whelping is over and nursing. (See Article Careful with Calcium.)

Easing Labor:

Since first time moms get tired and more worn out than 3rd litter moms, we started using Raspberry leaf extract which was used by the American Indians to ease labor and delivery. It worked well, and moms delivered easier and were less tired! That gave us an edge on Uterine Inertia and mothering. Tired moms don't mother well!

Diet Is Critical:

Too much protein in the diet can cause C-sections by encouraging puppy growth in-utero and large birthing weights. Just be reasonable and switch the bitch to puppy food the last 2 weeks of gestation when she is out of room and needs more calories per bite. As a side if your adults are tearing your kennel up and chewing through wire, look at your protein in the diet. Protein does to dogs what candy does to kids – hypes them up and they have to get rid of that energy.

For small breeds, we often feed puppy food for life. They have higher calories per bite need and small breeds seem to do better on slightly higher protein. We are OK with that and have had few issues, if we have watched how fat the females get. We want them lean at birth but not thin or fat. Fat in the pelvis impedes the birth process and we are trying to prevent C-Sections.

When you manage females, you have to look at vitamins! Vitamins can take a kennel that averages 8-9 months between heats and get them back to 6-7 where they naturally should be. Prenatal Vitamins and especially Iron get your puppy's Red Blood Cells to the max. They are born with all the RBC's they will have until 6 weeks. We want our puppies to fight to live! Anemic puppies you will fight to save. (See article on Vitamins and Reproduction.)

In our kennels there are far too many people giving advice that have no experience (or education) to back it up! When it comes to C-Sections, you can select and manage for few or none of them. We even have a few bulldog people who are developing "Free Whelpers" who give birth on their own. Now that is a challenge!

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