

SMALL LITTERS? - OR NO PUPPIES?

By Marianne Holmli, Kennel Pei Fang, Norway (2006)

In recent years there in the dog community was a good deal of empty females, small litters and puppies that die the first 14 days.

By chance I discovered that what abroad is called 'Fading Puppies' or that it would name in Norwegian, puppies that die the first day without any apparent reason, is the same as herpespuppies.

This I found out that I should check some of the time in several breeds are talking about problems getting puppies, small coal or the bitch owner is sure that the female has picked up but no puppies. When I started to investigate in Norway, there were few or none who had heard about it, but after having talked to a vet in Denmark, I got so much useful information that this must be dealt with in Norway.

Currently, it started with a research / collaboration with 4 animal clinics, Norwegian School of Veterinary Science, National Veterinary Research and the Government knows Medicinsk institution Uppsala, these will follow up dead puppies, but if there is suspicion of herpes viruses to take blood test. Then there are some who have puppies that inexplicably die, I will encourage breeders and live them to the nearest vet for autopsy. This is free and will get everyone. The same applies to empty females or females who lose their pups during pregnancy, these will then be able to take a blood sample, also for free if it is done at the clinics I write about below.

The clinics that are part of the cooperation is Tromsdal Animal Clinic, Stavanger Small animals clinic, Byaasen Animal Clinic and outpatient clinic Norwegian School of Veterinary Science. They will gather samples and detecting antibodies from ca. 400 dogs over 1 year, and from these results tell more about how extensive the problem is. Luckily I have a vet that is "dog man" in addition, he also examined a number with the result that it was sought to import the vaccine to Norway. This has been in production since 1998 in France, and came to Norway this October. Herpes Virus is up to now in Norway, one thing that has not been discussed, but a month ago I was at a meeting with representatives from the Norwegian Veterinary Institute, where they held a lecture cycle on Herpes Virus and the problems this could cause, and fortunately the treatment.

I think we've had this virus in Norway for many years, and the government statistics indicates that our neighbors have some major problems that 50% SWEDEN - DENMARK 80% - 88% ENGLAND, FRANCE had 80-90% but has come down on 40%. There's no reason why we in Norway would be free or? We go to a show, mate dogs abroad, importing dogs, etc.

We may have the virus on our dogs without knowing it, but stress can trigger an outbreak in the bitch without that we as breeders select something, and thus affect both the number of puppies, that no puppies at all, that the female takes themselves but "throw" them in the middle of pregnancy, worse it is and get puppies and then lose them. In some cases, dogs are sterile and that is tragic.

Part of what is reported is the litter of Boxer, 2 different females from the same kennel, the one 3 years of first litter. It was a caesarean section at 69 today, where all three puppies died ca. 12 days. The other was 5 years and had had previous litters, normal birth at 63 day. There were 5 puppies, all puppies died ca. 12 days.

The puppies were acutely ill and died within 8-10 hours after the first signs of disease.

It is also reported on how many Rottweiler puppies died ca. 2 weeks old.

In two litters of American Cocker Spaniel puppies died the first week of life.

It has come in reports from around the country about both puppiedeath, females who are taking a blood sample with antibodies, many "empty" females, so it is important and contact their veterinarian now, so that the vaccine will be available throughout the country, for I expect that most veterinarians do not have it in stock now.

Symptoms of Herpes Virus

How to prevent Herpes Virus on the bitch

- Avoid infectious contact, especially in pregnancy
- Good environment with low stress levels
- Vaccination!

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The puppies

- Heat lamp, then the puppies can not produce heat and to themselves
- Ensure supply of raw milk
- Avoid infectious contact.

Who should be vaccinated?

- Bitches herpes vaccinated 14 days after mating. So should it be vaccinated 1-2 weeks before the expected birth. This must be done with each pregnancy for the bitch.
- Pregnant females who are / have been exposed to herpes virus
- Pregnant females in areas with occurrence of the virus
- Pregnant females that have been proven herpes viruses.

NB. It is not appropriate to use the vaccine to puppies, dogs or bitches who will not be used for breeding.

What effect can we expect?

- Reduce the risk of early puppiedeath
- Increases the birth weight of pups
- So far, research shows that there is a tendency for increased litter size

Side Effects

There may be some swelling where the syringe is inserted, but is usually over in a week.

The last year I spoke with both dog people and veterinarians from across the country and there is no doubt that we have had the herpes virus in Norway for a while. Some farmers have said they know of it, whether they have had it themselves or they have heard about it, and indeed for several years. With the information we have now there is help and thankfully few.

If one suspects that they have the virus even in the kennel or you know that it is within the vicinity so I see no reason why we should not vaccinate. I for my part will start with it now, better safe than sorry

In the basic vaccine (Norway) for dogs now it is against canine distemper, parvovirus and infectious hepatitis. Previously, the kennel cough with the same vaccine but is taken away (Norway). Important to know and for those who believe that they get the dog vaccinated against kennel cough! It is perhaps one of the reasons that it is much kennel cough at the moment?

The reason it's taken away is that it is not recommended and give basic vaccine more than every 3 years while the kennel cough vaccine to be taken each year traveling some with dogs, or living in an area where there is an outbreak. Furthermore, as there are different rules in relation to the vaccine because depending on which country you will, for example, and exhibit dogs in Norway so they should be vaccinated every 2.år. So check with the country you are going to apply for countries that are demanding because the vaccine each year.

Is there anyone who has questions about Herpes Virus please contact me, I'm sitting with stacks of information from both Norway and other countries.

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(Norway 2006)