

# Abnoba Pet Store

## Basic Whelping advice and Puppy CPR

**This guide is intended to help you through the whelping process,**

Abnoba Pet Store cannot be held liable for any loss of puppies or dam or any other costs incurred or losses. This is a guide only and not a substitute for veterinary assistance. You know your bitch better than anyone else, should she appear in anyway distressed or you are concerned then veterinary assistance should be sought.

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## Introduction

Whelping your first litter of puppies can be one of the most exciting and worrying times of your life with dogs. Most owners find the whelping process very stressful but you have to remember that it is an act which comes naturally to the bitch and most of the time she could do without your interference, however to be on the safe side it is advisable that you are available to give her a helping hand should it be required and oversee the process in-case of any complications.

Whelping is a subject where you can get very conflicting advice; all breeders have their own way of doing things which will have always served them well so they have no reason to change. Treat this article as a common sense guide and you won't go far wrong. It is possible to get pet insurance that covers breeding - most policies do not cover breeding please check your policy if your bitch is insured. If things do go wrong during whelping it can be very expensive.

A number of supplements can be given before and after mating, Folic Acid and Wheatgerm Oil Capsules are two of the most popular. Where there is little documentation on Folic Acid, Wheatgerm Oil Capsules can be given all year round but for breeding purposes for 1 week before mating till 3 weeks after mating.

A supplement of Wheatgerm Oil Capsules provide a natural source of vitamin E to maintain fertility and a healthy reproductive system and it offers protection against abortion or absorption

The bitches food intake should be increased up until six weeks, after which she should be given all she will eat. As the puppies grow she will have less space in her stomach so it is recommended that she is fed Puppy food, which though given in smaller volume is higher in protein and fats. We recommend that you use a good quality food. The bitch should be wormed prior to mating, preferably within the four weeks before mating using a prescription worming treatment. She should be exercised as normal, if towards the end of the pregnancy she becomes too tired for her normal length of walk, reduce the distance but increase the frequency, it is important to maintain her fitness prior to whelping.

## PREPARATION

Preparation is the key to successful whelping. If you have all your equipment to hand, paperwork ready and emergency contacts by the phone you will feel more prepared and relaxed, if you are relaxed your dam will be more relaxed.

Your first decision is where do you expect the bitch to whelp? It must be an area where you can offer her and her pups warmth, no draughts, privacy yet human contact when needed, easy access to where she can toilet. As the puppies grow up they will need an area for them to go the toilet, this should also be considered when siting the whelping box.

Nature will tell your bitch to whelp somewhere quiet, busy rooms with lots of traffic and or strangers are not the most ideal places to whelp a litter, a stressed dam can abandon her puppies or worse.

Whelping boxes can be bought, made or hired. The whelping box should offer enough space for mum to lie down flat stretched out. To allow her to lie out flat along one side you will need to measure her from tip of nose to base of tail if you are intending to use pig rails add space for these to the measurements and you will now have the smallest size box you require. To help mom get used to the whelping box let her use it as place to sleep for 1 to 2 weeks before she is due to whelp.

As it gets nearer to her due date you will have to prepare for the actual whelping. Always have a notepad and pen to hand, ready to log her progress, times and events, remember to take this with you in the event you need to contact your vet for help. This list of her progress will help the vet decide on any course of action which may be required. We strongly recommend that you inform you vet in advance that your girl is pregnant, as whelping becomes imminent or her due date approaches give them a courtesy call to let them know what is going on, it will go down well should you need to call them at some ungodly hour.

We recommend you check the following items at least four to five days prior to whelping:

1. Emergency Contacts - Vets (and out of hours vets numbers) opening hours etc are ready by phone
2. Your whelping kit,
3. Your whelping box, your girl should be settling into this now
3. Collect as many newspapers as possible
4. Plenty of Bin liners for soiled papers.
5. A Torch and spare batteries
6. Clean White Towels for rubbing up puppies.
7. Dental floss
8. A Strong plastic container with hot water bottles and / or a heat pad.
9. Note pad and pen

## The Day of Whelping

If all goes to plan, she will be ready to whelp approximately 63 days after the mating. It is rarely exactly 63 days, as the eggs may not have been fertilized on the exact day of the mating but a few days, later so don't be alarmed if the pups don't arrive to order! It is important to watch the bitch carefully the week before as some bitches can whelp 5 to 6 days early. The signs to watch out for come in three stages, Please remember these are indications and not all bitches will follow this pattern.

### STAGE 1

The bitch will become restless and may refuse food prior to labour. Many bitches start panting and shivering and will tear up their bedding, shredding any paper in her whelping box and forming it into a "nest" - this is her natural instinct which she should be allowed to follow. Bedding etc can be re-arranged once she has whelped. It is not necessary to have blankets or vet bedding type material in the whelping box for the actual whelping. Her temperature will drop for a few hours to around 97-99°F or 36.11-37.22°C (it is usually 101.5°F/38.67°C).

At these signs, labour should start in about 4 to 24 hours. It is most important to ensure that she is allowed privacy, keep the number of people with her to a minimum, if she feels threatened by strangers or too many onlookers may cause her to stop labour or delay the passing of her pups. If she needs to go to the toilet - take her outside on a lead, at night ensure you have a torch with you just in case she pops a puppy out. You may notice a mucous/jelly like discharge - this is completely normal and indicates labour is imminent.

### STAGE 2

The the cervix is fully dilated and she starts labour, straining or contracting in a purposeful manner, with more vaginal discharge being seen. A water bag normally pops out of the vulva quite soon after this and if followed by further forceful efforts, a puppy plus its placenta should follow within the hour. Keep a check on the number of placentas expelled as there must be one for each puppy. You could let your bitch eat all of these, but opinions vary in this area. It is natural in the wild and so too for many bitches. If the full numbers of placenta are not passed by the end of whelping, seek veterinary advice. Some pups may present themselves tail first (breach) but this is not a problem. If a puppy gets stuck half in and half out with mum straining excessively, you can help by pulling the pup gently DOWNWARDS and TOWARDS MUMS HEAD until the pup is released. Pups are normally (but not always) born inside the membranes. Allow mum the opportunity to rupture them herself, if she does not, take hold of the pup, tear the membrane open and run your finger through the pups mouth to clear any mucous or use a bulb syringe/nasal aspirator to clear the nose and mouth. Cut the cord with a blunt pair of scissors - you need to crush the cord whilst cutting, semi dry the pup and then let the bitch take over. If the cord does not stop bleeding try pressure on it for about one minute (holding it tight between your thumb and forefinger) and if this fails, tie it tight with the dental floss. The action of drying the pup stimulates it into consciousness, gets it breathing correctly and kick starts it into life. Once this is established, try to put it on a rear teat as this is where the goodness is concentrated. Should you have more pups than teats you may need to rotate pups or bottle feed as necessary.

### **STAGE 3**

The third stage is the rest period between pups. This rest can vary between 5 minutes to one hour, but provided she is not over restless or straining for longer than 30 minutes with no results, there should be nothing to worry about. The whole process normally takes any time from between two to twenty four hours. Afterbirths do not necessarily follow one after each pup and it is quite natural for a batch to arrive at any time.

If no pups have presented themselves within 2 hours of her beginning to strain or if 4 hours has passed between pups with no sign of more presenting themselves please contact your vet urgently. Do not panic as this will only help to upset the bitch, if you have everything prepared your vets number will be to hand, ensure you have your pad with all events and times with you when you call. If you are in any doubt at any time, contact your vet telling him all the events which have taken place and he will advise you what to do next.

We recommend you remove the pups while mum is still delivering further pups to keep them safe and out of harm's way. Please ensure you place them into a box containing a hot water bottle or heat pad which is already turned on and warm.

### **POST-WHELP**

It is advisable to get the vet to check mum out within 24 hours of her finishing labour, to ensure there is nothing left inside which shouldn't be there. Owing to the fact that veterinary surgeries are likely to have sick animals visiting them, it is preferable for the vet to visit you for this inspection.

You may find that mum might appear to be off her food for a few days after whelping, but she is probably loathed to leave her pups to eat or drink herself. If this is the case, offer her some puppy milk (Evaporated Milk, Water, egg yolk, honey and yogurt) most bitches will lap this up. Continue to offer food and water whilst she is in the box until she appears more comfortable in leaving them. She may only pop out for short trips to the toilet this is quite normal as she won't want to leave her babies for long.

# How to give Newborn Puppy Rescue Breaths & CPR

## Items you will need:

- Clean towel
- Bulb syringe

### Step 1

Place the un-breathing puppy on a clean towel and enclose his entire body, including the towel, in your hands with your palms and fingers touching. Hold the head and neck stable between your fingers and thumbs.

### Step 2

Swing the puppy several times between your legs using the entire length of your arms to provide centrifugal force. This movement forces fluid in the puppy's lungs up and out to his mouth and nose.

### Step 3

Suction fluid out of the puppy's nose and mouth using a bulb syringe and begin rubbing the puppy vigorously with the towel to stimulate breathing.

### Step 4

Seal your lips over the puppy's nose and mouth and give two to three small, very gentle, puffs of air to inflate his lungs. Inflate the chest only to the amount of a normal breath of air for the puppy.

### Step 5

Feel the puppy's chest wall between your fingers to find a heartbeat or use a stethoscope to listen for a heartbeat. If the heart is not beating, find the area of the puppy's chest right below the back of the elbow when it is in the bent position. This is where you will need to compress. Use your thumb and your forefinger on the chest to press down. Since a newborn puppy's normal heart rate can be anywhere from 120 to 180 beats per minute, you will need to compress much more quickly than you would if giving a human CPR. Aim for 2-3 compressions per second.

### Step 6

Give another two to three breaths every 15 to 20 seconds and check for a heartbeat after every minute.

### Step 7

Feel the chest for a heartbeat every minute. If you feel a faint, slow heartbeat, rub the puppy's body with a towel to stimulate blood circulation. You may need to deliver a couple more puffs of air. Continue to stimulate the puppy for 20 minutes or until the puppy begins to perk up. (If the puppy is recovering it will vocalize and begin to "pink up"---the color of his skin, mouth and ears will turn bright pink from the circulating blood and oxygen in its body).

If at this point, there is still no heartbeat, continue giving CPR and rescue breaths for about five minutes. After that point, it's unlikely that he can be saved

