



**ANAL GLAND DISEASE**

**What Are Anal Glands?**

The anal sacs are a pair of glands which lie under the skin on each side of the rectum at the anus. They produce a strong odor-ed, brown fluid that is used by the dog and cat as a territorial marker. In the dog a female in heat has an attractant in her anal gland secretion too. Normally the glands discharge a small amount of secretion with each bowel movement.

Sometimes they do not empty regularly and the secretion becomes dried out and very thick. With continued production of the secretion the gland may become swollen and painful and even rupture beneath the skin. A ruptured anal gland will create an abscess or pocket of pus beside the anus. It is very painful and will drain and bleed periodically through the skin.

Any cat or dog can have this problem though poodles, chihuahuas, and terriers seem to have it more often than other breeds.

**The Signs of Anal Gland Problems**

Sometimes the signs of impending anal gland impaction are very subtle: the pet licking or biting under the tail or along the hips; scooting its rear end on the ground; straining or even whimpering when having a bowel movement.

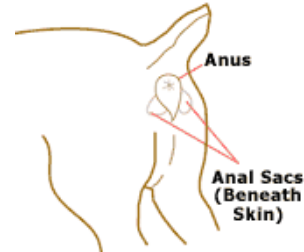
If an abscess forms the area will be very tender and swollen. After it ruptures a bloody discharge will be apparent.

**Treatment**

Early in the course of the problem, treatment may be as simple as having the glands expressed (emptied). The secretion can then be examined for signs of infection or pus.

If one of the glands becomes abscessed, the pet will require minor surgery under a general anesthetic. The area will be flushed out and cleaned and medication placed into the inflamed pocket. Usually antibiotics are prescribed to eliminate any possible infection. Some pets may require an Elizabethan collar to prevent licking the site. Repeated bouts of

impaction are a sign that the anal glands should be surgically removed.



**Home Care Medicine**

Use as directed and on the label. Unless otherwise directed, give it until it is used up.

Special instructions: \_\_\_\_\_

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Your next appointment is \_\_\_\_\_.

**Call Us If...**

- Your pet continues to discharge from the surgical site after a couple of days.
- You notice any degradation in your pet's general health
- You notice signs of renewed anal problems after the healing period.

*Thank you for this opportunity to serve you!*