

FAQ on Canine Estrus (Heat) Cycles

When will my dog go into heat?

The first heat cycle usually occurs between 6-10 months of age, but this varies greatly, especially among different breeds. Often the first heat cycle is “silent” - little or no bleeding or vulvar swelling and is often un-noticed by the owner.

How often will my dog go into heat?

The frequency of heat cycles varies. The average is every 6 months, but can vary from approximately every 5 to 10 months. Some is due to breed variations and some just to individual dog variations.

How long will the heat cycle last?

Bleeding usually occurs for 6-11 days, with 9 being the average. During this time the female usually wants nothing to do with males. When the bleeding stops is usually the time most likely when a female will allow breeding and pregnancy is most likely.

When should I breed my dog?

Not before 18 months of age - 2 years is better! As to the actual event - if using a male and not AI (artificial insemination), let the dogs be your guide. Introduce the dogs on day 6 of the bleeding. If using AI start serial progesterone testing on day 4 of bleeding.