Proceedings of the 8th International Symposium on Canine and Feline Reproduction

ISCFR

June 22-25, 2016
Paris, France

In a joint meeting with the XIX EVSSAR Congress

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Pathological growth of the mammary glands during pregnancy in a bitch
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This abstract describes the case of a two-year-old french bulldog with a pathological growth of the mammary glands, which was presented to a private veterinary practice during her first pregnancy. No determination of optimal breeding time was done during heat, hence the exact date of the pregnancy was unknown. Calculated from the day of mating, the pregnancy was between day 42 and 48. Reason for presentation was a massive enlargement of the mammary glands. The dog was in a good general condition with an intact pregnancy. The mammary glands were of extensive size, from a hard consistency, not painful and milk ejection could be stimulated. An ultrasound of the mammary glands showed good blood flow and no special pathological findings. The blood count revealed a mild leukocytosis. Because of the particularity of the case a collaboration with the clinic for Clinic of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Andrology of Large and Small Animals with Ambulatory Service was started. Bacterial swabs from the milk and fine needle aspiration from the mammary glands were taken and a therapy with amoxicillin clavulanic acid was started. The bacterial swabs showed no bacterial growth, whereas the fine needle aspiration revealed a fibroepithelial hyperplasia with no signs of infection. On day 51-57 after mating the dog was presented in the clinic for Clinic of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Andrology of Large and Small Animals with Ambulatory Service because the mammary glands continued to enlarge and the skin started to be reddish blue. The dog was in good general condition, despite the massive growth of the mammary glands. An incontinentia lactis could be observed. The pregnancy was still intact, on demand of the owners the pregnancy was not terminated and a steroid therapy was started. On day 54-60 after mating the bitch was presented for birth induction¹, because of the ongoing growth of the mammary glands. The progesterone was 7,1 ng/ml. X-ray revealed six puppies, which were born one day after induction. One puppy was euthanized due to a spina bifida, two puppies were delivered dead. The three surviving puppies showed no sign of prematurity. During birth, the bitch showed a massive milk ejection. After birth the mammary glands started to soften in their consistency and to reduce in size. The amount of lactation kept on being high. During lactation the mammary glands reduced further in size and the bitch nursed the puppies the entire time. The strong increase in the size of the mammary gland during pregnancy, the result of the fine needle aspiration as well as the reduction of size of the mammary glands after birth indicate a fibroadenomatosi. This condition usually occurs in cats² and only one case report in a dog has been described yet³. Different from the typical feline fibroadenomatosis was the high amount of lactation presented in this case.