

## Dogs Health- Post Natal Care

Pregnancy and nursing are major stressors to your pet. The following procedures are recommended to ensure the health of both mother and offspring:

- We recommend a post-birth physical examination and any necessary treatment within 24 hours of delivery. We will be happy to answer any questions you may have at that time.
- Fresh, clean water should be available at all times.
- We recommend feeding a premium puppy food to nursing dogs.
- You should feed your dog as much as she wants while she is nursing.
- Try to keep the new family in quiet surroundings and avoid commotion for the first two weeks. Excitement causes many of the problems we see in nursing dogs and their puppies. Let your nursing dog exercise as much as she wants.
- A soft stool is not unusual for a few days after birth.
- Palpate the breasts and observe nipples daily. Wash with warm water if needed. Schedule an examination if any discoloration of the skin, tenderness, or severe engorgement occurs. Watch for sores on the nipples as the puppies begin to get teeth.
- Schedule an examination if the female has a change of disposition or if nervousness or tremors develop.
- A bath is recommended for Mom regularly during the nursing period. Daily brushing is important for proper sanitation. Schedule an exam if you begin to see a significant loss of hair or bald spots.
- Some weight loss is to be expected, but schedule an exam if the pet becomes thin. Routine fecal examinations should be performed to guard against intestinal parasites, especially those that could be passed on to the puppies.
- If you decide to spay your pet to avoid future "heat" cycles and pregnancy, it is best to wait at least one week AFTER the puppies are weaned.
- Expect to see a normal "heat" cycle about six months after the cycle on which your dog was bred.
- Food quantity should be reduced at weaning to help decrease milk flow. Schedule an exam if the breasts become engorged while weaning the puppies.