



STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION USING FRESH CHILLED AND FROZEN STORED CANINE SEMEN

For approximately 40 years, veterinarians have had the technology to freeze or chill semen for insemination at a remote time and/or distance. Early on, veterinarian's success in turning these breedings into pregnancies has been limited by the ability to pinpoint the exact moment in time that the insemination should occur. Recently, more accurate and more accessible progesterone testing has increased success in producing pregnancies with distant inseminations.

FRESH CHILLED SEMEN COLLECTION TO BE SHIPPED FROM YOUR STUD DOG TO A REMOTE SITE:

1. Contact both veterinarians you will be working with as early in the bitch's estrus as possible to assure staff and shipping methods are available when needed. Be sure to have the recipient's address (typically a veterinary clinic) available.
2. Confirm the dog and bitch are both in good health, have had health screening, such as OFA and CERF, completed in advance, negative Brucella tests in the past 3 months, and are current on immunizations and preventive worming. Consider having a semen analysis and test chill done on the male to be used to assure he is currently fertile.
3. Upon confirmation of the date(s) the semen is to be shipped, call your veterinary clinic to schedule an appointment. Collections for shipment are best done early in the day to allow adequate time for courier service to arrange for pickup. This will help assure timely delivery of the semen. The semen, once collected, is viable for 24 to 36 hours; delayed insemination reduces the chance of a breeding resulting in a pregnancy. The inseminating veterinarian also needs time to schedule the bitch for insemination. Let both veterinary clinics know if additional semen shipments are requested. Typically, using fresh chilled semen, two collections are made and shipped.
4. DNA testing of the stud dog is now required (if not previously done) to register the litter with the AKC. This test is a simple cheek swab which can be collected at the appointment. Your signature and payment are required for submission to the AKC. A color DNA certificate, which includes your dog's DNA profile number, will be mailed directly to you.
5. To complete the AKC paperwork for insemination with fresh chilled semen, you will need your dog's registered name and AKC number and, if previously DNA profiled, his DNA profile number.
6. Payment for the service of collecting and shipping the semen is usually made by the owner of the bitch. Payment is usually required prior to shipping the semen. Charges are usually for collection, packaging, and shipping with an overnight service. The package contains only canine semen and gel packs, not dry ice. If necessary, counter-to-counter shipment may be an option. This requires that the shipper has known shipper status with a specific airline. The breeders on both ends are responsible for travel to and from the airport.
7. Remember, at times, delays in receiving the semen can occur due to problems with inclement weather, or lost or misdirected shipments. Keep in mind, this is an inconvenience and may interfere with a successful breeding, but at least it was only a lost box and not your prized dog. You may need to arrange for an additional shipment if notified of this minor catastrophe. The shipping clinic can provide you with the tracking number.

FRESH CHILLED SEMEN COLLECTION TO BE SHIPPED TO YOUR BITCH:

1. Prior to the estrus you plan to breed her on, your bitch should have vaccinations updated, worming completed, and a complete physical examination. Your veterinarian will take a breeding history, do a vaginal exam and cultures if indicated. A Brucella test should be run within the 3 months prior to breeding. Health screening tests such as OFA and CERF should have been completed in advance. At the time estrus begins, it is not possible to initiate testing and receive results in time for a breeding. The same should hold true for the stud dog – Brucella testing, OFA and CERF. If he has not recently sired a litter, he should have a semen analysis with test chill performed.
2. Contact both veterinary offices at the first sign your bitch is in estrus. It is a good idea to have her seen in the first 5 days of her estrus for a vaginal cytology to assess that she is truly early in her cycle and has not come into estrus silently. Your veterinarian will schedule her for sequential vaginal cytologies and progesterone testing based on this cytology and her reproductive history.
3. At this time, you should contact the collecting veterinarian to determine how the semen will be shipped and provide them with your veterinary clinic's address and phone number for shipping. In some cases, they will have supplies in stock at their hospital. In other cases, you may need to arrange to send out a shipping kit to the stud dog owner's veterinarian. These charges will be put on the credit card of the bitch's owner.
4. Locate a collecting veterinarian that has experience in collecting semen or is interested in working with you. ***Be sure the stud dog owner's collecting veterinarian labels the TUBE with the owner's name, the dog's name, AKC number, and date and time of collection. Many clinics receive multiple semen shipments on the same day, and need this information to be assured the correct semen is being used on your bitch.***
5. At the time ovulation is about to occur (based on a progesterone level of 4 to 8 ng/ml), your clinic will advise you to contact the owner of the stud dog to arrange for collection and shipment. On weekdays, an overnight courier service such as FedEx or UPS can be used. On holidays and weekends, airline counter-to-counter or the US Postal Service may need to be used. At shipment, you should request the air bill or tracking numbers should a shipment need to be tracked.
6. Your clinic will arrange an appointment for your bitch to come in for insemination. Inseminations can be done vaginally, by transcervical insemination, or surgically. This can be repeated in 24 to 48 hours to improve the chances of conception. Your bitch should be encouraged to urinate prior to insemination and kept quiet/crated for 2 hours post-insemination.
7. The collecting veterinarian may use UPS or FedEx. On holidays or weekends, counter-to-counter at the airlines may be used. The owner of the bitch and stud dog will need to arrange to have the shipment at the airport at least 2 hours prior to departure to get the shipment loaded. The shipper must have known shipper status with any airline you use. Be sure to state, if you are questioned, that you are shipping semen in a Styrofoam shipper on ice packs (no dry ice is used – this is a hazardous material).
8. Twenty four to 28 days post-insemination, we recommend your bitch be palpated and/or ultrasounded to establish if she has become pregnant. This is an important piece of medical information to establish a reproductive history. If she is pregnant, this is the time to change her diet to a high quality performance diet, line up supplies for whelping, and arrange for someone to be available for whelping assistance.

Fees for these services include: Serial vaginal cytologies and progesterone levels; inseminations(s); palpation/ultrasound/x-rays to confirm pregnancy; to the collecting veterinarian for collection, shipping medium, packaging, and shipment.

COLLECTING SEMEN FROM YOUR STUD DOG FOR FREEZING:

1. Complete all health screenings for your stud dog including such evaluations as CERF and OFA.

Have a complete physical examination including a digital prostate exam, to assure he is in good general health. The ideal time to freeze semen is prior to the dog's aging (at 2 to 5 years of age) as semen quality is usually better and will yield a higher quality freeze. In some cases, older dogs can be frozen successfully.

2. Bring along a COPY of the dog's AKC certificate.
3. Complete DNA testing for AKC (required) if not previously done. This test is a simple cheek swab. Your signature is required for submission to the AKC. A color DNA certificate, which includes your dog's DNA profile number, will be mailed directly to you.
4. Contact the veterinary office to confirm staff and teaser bitch availability and schedule an appointment.
Fees for this at most veterinary hospitals include: a complete physical examination; filing AKC paperwork; collection of the stud dog, freezing and storing the semen; the Brucella test; and for the teaser bitch if you do not provide your own.
5. To release the semen, the stud dog or semen owner **MUST** directly contact the office where the semen is stored. The owner must complete the "Semen Release Form" prior to the requested shipping date. You will need to include the number of vials of semen you are releasing and the destination address. Payment is typically due at the time of release.
6. Fees to release and ship the semen are: semen release; tank rental; overnight shipment; return of the shipping container; a deposit on the shipper; and additional rental if the tank is not returned on time. The owner of the bitch usually pays release and shipping costs as well as for the stud fee.
7. Remember to regard your frozen semen as a finite and valuable asset. Release it with forethought. It should remain viable for many years – make arrangements accordingly in your will.

BREEDING YOUR BITCH WITH FROZEN SEMEN:

Breeding with frozen semen is less forgiving, more complicated and more expensive than other breedings. It can also be very rewarding utilizing the genetics of stud dogs of a by-gone era.

REMEMBER THESE HIGH POINTS:

- You are using semen that is expensive and is likely limited in availability. Use this finite resource wisely.
 - Timing the bitch's cycle must be precise, and the insemination window is approximately 12 to 24 hours. Follow your veterinarian's guidelines carefully.
 - Anesthesia and surgery are used for most frozen inseminations. Consider the benefits versus the risks before embarking on this.
1. As with any breeding, be sure your bitch is current on her vaccinations, has her pre-breeding screening, and is in good health. It is preferred to use frozen semen on a young bitch. Aged bitches tend to release fewer eggs and have decreased fertility.
 2. Arrange for the frozen semen to be released prior to your bitch's heat or early in her cycle. The owner of the semen, usually the stud dog owner, must sign a release form. Shipping costs from the storage facility are usually due in advance of release, and the owner of the bitch usually will pay the release fee, overnight shipping, portable semen shipping tank rental, and return shipping of the tank to the storage facility.
 3. Contact your veterinarian's office at the FIRST SIGN that your bitch is in heat. Her first appointment should be within the first 6 days of her estrus for a vaginal cytology to confirm that she is early in her estrus. Your veterinarian will plan sequential vaginal cytologies and progesterone testing based on this cytology and her reproductive history.
 4. Progesterone tests should be run frequently, approximately every 24 to 48 hours as ovulation nears. LH levels may also be ordered. Pre-surgical blood work should be drawn at one of these visits in preparation for anesthesia.
 5. Your veterinary clinic will schedule your bitch for insemination. In some instances, transcervical insemination (TCI) may be preferred. For a surgical insemination, she will

receive general anesthetic. Once she is under anesthesia, a midline incision is made similar to that for a spay. The uterus will be exteriorized, and examined, semen placed in the lumen, the uterus repositioned into the abdomen, and the abdominal wall and skin closed. She will be recovered from anesthesia and discharged the same day. She should be kept quiet and crated for a minimum of 4 hours post-op. She should rest for several days post-op.

6. At day 24 to 28, she should be scheduled for an ultrasound for early diagnosis of pregnancy.

BEST WISHES FOR GREAT FERTILITY.

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