



Thank you for contacting us to assist you in breeding your dog.

Prior to breeding, we recommend your bitch be in good physical condition, be current on vaccinations, parasite free, and have her health screenings completed.

Progesterone levels are the backbone of timing bitches for breeding. This is essential for special need bitches with a history of infertility or missed breedings, pregnancies that did not go to completion, or bitches who will be bred using fresh chilled (shipped) or frozen semen. Progesterone testing is also useful in determining when a bitch should be receptive for a natural breeding in cases where either the female or male is reluctant to breed. Additionally, knowing her progesterone levels at the time of breeding allows us to predict within 24 hours when she should whelp. This information can save money, time, and puppies.

As soon as you notice your bitch is in season, please contact us. If you are planning to use frozen or fresh chilled semen, it is helpful if you have notified us in advance. We can assist you in arranging shipment of the frozen semen prior to the start of her heat cycle. We can also help you arrange for supplies and manage the details of shipping fresh semen.

The first progesterone level should be drawn on day 6 of her heat cycle. If she has a history of short cycles, the first progesterone should be drawn at the first sign of estrus. We then recommend you repeat the progesterone testing every 2 to 3 days until her progesterone rises to 3 ng/dl; it should be repeated the next day. A progesterone of 3 ng/dl indicates she is very close to ovulation.

Ovulation occurs when the progesterone is 5 ng/dl. We like to have at least one more progesterone 2 to 3 days after her progesterone reaches or exceeds 5 ng/dl to assure she has completed her ovulation. We typically breed 2 days after 5 ng/dl if using fresh or fresh chilled semen. We typically breed 3 days after 5 ng/dl if using frozen semen IF the progesterone reaches or exceeds 20 ng/dl. Many bitches will have a progesterone level of 15 to 40 ng/dl at the time of the breeding; this is normal. We breed 7 days a week, including holidays, based on your bitch's ideal time for breeding.

We can usually run progesterone levels in our hospital with results available within the hour. If you live a distance away, it is often more convenient to have these drawn and submitted to the lab by your local veterinarian. As we will assist in interpreting the results and timing the breeding, your local veterinarian may prefer not to be involved in any aspect other than submitting the samples for you and providing us with a lab tracking number.

The following are guidelines to assist your veterinarian in submitting blood samples for progesterone levels:

1. Submit the sample to Marshfield Laboratory for a Canine Progesterone assay whenever possible. Include the date and TIME the sample was drawn on the requisition form. The sample should be placed in a non-barrier tube (not an SST tube), spun down, and the serum transferred into a transport tube. In-office semi-quantitative tests (such as ICG or Camelot Farms) are not accurate enough to use for this situation. If Marshfield Laboratory is not an option for you, you can submit samples to Antech, IDEXX, or contact your local human hospital and have a progesterone level run there as they are not species specific. We prefer the results from Marshfield as they have proven to be reliable and repeatable.

2. Draw and submit the first sample on day 6 of the bitch's cycle. Draw the sample on day 3 of her cycle if she has been brought into heat with medication or has a short proestrus. If the first date is not known, submit at the earliest time you are contacted by the client.
3. Subsequent tests are run approximately every 2 to 3 days but this will vary based on the results and the day of the week upon which this falls. Call us if you have any questions about when to re-sample the patient.
4. Please mark the Marshfield form to fax (or call) the results to us and your clinic as soon as you receive them. Our fax number is 920-269-2345. Baseline levels, less than 2 ng/dl, can wait until the next working day (use 920-269-4072 phone or 920-269-2345 fax). **ANY RESULT OVER 2.5 SHOULD BE CALLED TO US AS SOON AS POSSIBLE (920-269-4072) AS THIS REPRESENTS A RISE IN THE PROGESTERONE LEVEL AND SIGNIFIES ACTION WILL BE TAKING PLACE SOON.** We breed 2 to 3 days after the progesterone level begins to rise. In many bitches, this rise can be very rapid. As we will need at least 24 hours notice for shipping semen, timely receipt of the results is important. Great communication between our office, your office, and your client is critical at this point to achieve a successful breeding. Your client will appreciate having someone who knows their dog handle the blood testing.
5. Marshfield runs the tests and reports results even on evenings, weekends and holidays.
6. If the results will be received by your office on a holiday or weekend, **PLEASE CALL US AT 920-269-4072 WITH THE NAME & PHONE NUMBER OF YOUR CLIENT AND THE CONTROL NUMBER (7 numerical digits ending in CA) MARSHFIELD FORM SO THAT WE CAN RETREIVE THE RESULTS OUTSIDE OF REGULAR OFFICE HOURS.** This will keep us from having to interrupt your weekend plans.

For ANY bitch that will be anesthetized for a surgical insemination or any non-surgical bitch over 6 or with a history of chronic health problems, we recommend a complete blood panel with chemistries and CBC be drawn in advance of the procedure. If not previously run, we will run this test in house on the day of breeding. We recommend that a Brucellosis test be run prior to breeding **ANY** dog or bitch. We can run this test in house the day of the breeding if not run previously.

It is our goal to make your breeding as simple and successful as possible. Please contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Marthina L Greer DVM, JD

International Canine Semen Bank – Wisconsin

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