



## Pregnancy Timeline

### Day 1

Your dog has successfully mated, mark on calendar and the due date of whelping. About 48 – 73 hours after mating, fertilization of the eggs occurs.

### Days 7-10

You may notice that your dog's vulva has remained swollen since she was on heat. This is the first sign that your dog is pregnant. The fertilized egg becomes a 64 celled Blastocyte and descends into the uterus. They develop all of their major organs and by day 20 they look like miniature puppies. Her nipples might enlarge and get dark pink in color. Continue her nutrition and exercise as normal.

### Day 21 (3 Weeks - 4 Weeks)

By now the embryo plants in the uterus. Your dog is going to show symptoms of morning sickness due to the hormonal changes. She is likely to go off her food, and vomit a little yellow bile in the morning. This is the equivalent of morning sickness in humans. If this goes on for longer than the 3-10 days, or is accompanied by lethargy or listlessness, you will need to see your vet.

This stage should pass quickly and some bitches never miss a meal! Ultrasound is probably the best and most accurate method of confirming a pregnancy. It is also expensive, so may not be a viable alternative for most breeders. Ultrasound is non invasive, safe and pain-free for the bitch. The belly area may have to be shaved, but no other preparations are needed.

Ultrasound can be performed as early as 18 days, although 21-28 day is ideal. Heartbeats can be detected by 26 days. Although ultrasound is a good pregnancy indicator, it is not accurate for telling how many puppies a bitch will have.

### Day 26

Mark in your calendar a trip to your vet who can palpate and confirm the pregnancy.

### **Day 30 -35**

At this stage your vet can perform a blood test to determine whether or not your dog is going to be a mother.

### **4-5 Weeks and Onwards**

At this stage your dog may have a clear discharge from her vagina. This is considered a reasonably reliable pregnancy indicator and will remain until the birth of the pups. The discharge is clear and has the consistency of thick Vaseline and is odorless. If you do happen to notice the discharge to be green or bloody then consult your vet.

### **Days 30 - 35**

It is now very obvious that your bitch is pregnant. Daisy let us feel the puppies, so you should be able to feel them as well, although some dogs may not like you touching her belly. We certainly could feel them move, however it will be hard for you to figure out how many there are and as you approach 45 days the puppies will be crowding each other making it impossible to count them. Just be careful and don't play rough. The puppies have developed their color pigments at this stage.

### **Day 35 Week 5**

Your dog may be starting to look pregnant, with a wider waist and nipples that have changed to a deeper pink. You may notice a thickening of her sides, between her ribs and hipbone. A dog's weight will begin to increase so increase the food ration to meet her needs but avoid overfeeding.

### **Day 45**

By 45 days your dog's appetite will decrease. It is important that you offer her lots of small meals through out the day so she can eat a little and not get overly full.

### **Days 45 -60**

At this stage, the pup's bones will have calcium in them. After this point the vet can take an x-ray to count the number of pups to expect. By day 60, the x-ray can determine the size of the pups and if they are going to be too big to pass through the birth canal.

## **Day 42 and on (last 3 weeks)**

Your dog needs to be in quarantine from now on. This means absolutely no contact with any other dogs, including other household pets. The reason? The Herpes virus. This virus can be passed among dogs by everyday activities such as licking and sniffing. For an adult dog there may well be no symptoms, or just a simple cold, however, the ramifications for the unborn puppies is much more severe, and can result in miscarriage and even death.

### **50 Days**

By 50 Days you will most likely be able to see the puppies move while they are inside the mother, just as you would with a human. Her belly is very swollen and hard. Your dog will be restless and spend a lot of time grooming herself. She will begin to wander and sniff places to nest. Now is a good time to begin to take her to the whelping box and sit with her whilst she becomes familiar with it. In further preparation for whelping give your bitch a full body bath. It will probably be the last one she can have for a while. Trim her toenails, and make sure her teeth are clean -- she could pass an infection to her puppies when biting their cords if her teeth are dirty.

Carefully clean her nipples and breasts with Betadine scrub or Phisohex. Remove any excess skin deposits and dirt. Treat any sore spots with A&D ointment or plain vaseline. One week before her due date, start washing her breasts daily with plain water and a terry wash cloth. This helps to toughen up her breasts, making vigorous nursing less painful to her in the first few days and decreasing the risk of her rejecting her puppies.

### **58-68 Days**

By day 58 you should be able to see milk if you gently apply pressure to her nipples. You can trim the hairs surrounding the nipples so that the puppies won't have a hard time sucking milk. Your dog is considered full term if she has her puppies at 58 days. Before this time, and her puppies will be premature and aren't likely to make it. The average is about 64 days, however this is not a guarantee.

### **The Last Week**

You may notice in the last week that your dog's waistline may have reappeared, or be looking slimmer than it was. This is a sure sign the puppies have dropped down into position closer to the birth canal, and they will be arriving within the week.

Alternatively, your dog's tummy may be sagging even more noticeably than earlier. If your dog should get to 70 days past mating and there is no sign of labor you need to call your veterinarian.

## **The Last Day or Two (Ideally Day 61-62)**

Your dog will lose her appetite dramatically, and possibly altogether. Along with a drop in temperature, this is a great indicator that the pups will be born shortly, within the next 12-24 hours.

Other signs that she is getting close to giving birth include shivering, panting, pacing, acting out of character, and digging at the floor. She may also go into hiding. If you are seeing these signs then you should have puppies in six to twenty-four hours.

## **Just before the Birth**

You may notice that your dog starts to spend more time in her whelping box. She may seem a bit obsessed with pawing through the papers. This is termed as "nesting" or "pre-denning" and is a primitive urge that is fueled by the pregnancy hormones.

Pregnant wolves can display this sort of behavior for up to 3 weeks before giving birth. She may also try to hide under a bed so encourage her to come out and go to the whelping box instead.

## **Temperature taking**

For the last 7 days you should be taking your dog's temperature via her rectum (get the vet to show you how if you are unsure) twice a day. Normally, a dog's temperature will be approximately 38.5 degrees Celsius, or 101 degrees Fahrenheit. A dog's temperature can vary from dog to dog, so you will soon observe what is normal for your dog. Make a note of this as it will come in handy not just to signal labor, but also if she should get a fever at any stage.

A drop in your dog's temperature to 37 degrees Celsius, or 97-98 degrees Fahrenheit, indicates the puppies will be on their way, generally within 12-24 hours. If your dog's temperature should rise, you should seek your veterinarian's opinion as this is usually indicative of a fever, generally caused by an infection.

Source:

The Beginners Guide for Safely Breeding Happy Healthy Pups from Home

Courtesy of the <http://www.dog-health-guide.org>