



## Janice L. Cain, DVM

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## BREEDING WITH FROZEN SEMEN: PROGESTERONE AND LH TESTING

### Why measure both hormones?

We know that after thawing, semen probably survives less than 24 hours. To pinpoint the insemination date, a combination of progesterone and LH (leutenizing hormone) testing is advised. LH is the hormone that triggers the ovulation. The duration of the actual LH peak is variable: it can be several hours up to 3 days. Typically, the first rise of progesterone correlates with the LH peak. The measurement of progesterone is always an estimation of the LH peak. It is ideal to attempt to detect the LH peak directly to improve accuracy. We use progesterone testing to determine when to test for LH and to confirm that the LH rise is likely to trigger ovulation.

### The Catch

Since the LH peak can be short, daily testing is needed. In some cases the LH peak can be missed even with daily testing. If only LH was measured, continued negative results would be misleading. By also testing progesterone, we can more accurately assess the LH results. It is more cost effective to run progesterone every other day and then later choose certain days to run the LH test.

### The Protocol

Start on day 5-7 of the cycle (day 1 = first day of vaginal bleeding in most cases). Every day thereafter serum is saved and frozen. Every other day, either whole blood, or serum is submitted for progesterone testing. Once progesterone starts to rise, serum from certain days will be tested for LH. We usually test 1-3 samples to confirm the LH rise.

### Testing at BRVC

We are open 7 days per week for your convenience. Please schedule a drop in appointment with a technician to expedite the process.

### Testing Elsewhere

Please have your DVM follow these instructions for daily blood draws:

- \* Every other day submit to Idexx for progesterone (test #806) using RTT, no serum separator.
- \* Every day, the owner should save serum samples in their household freezer, tubes should be labeled with the correct date.
- \* HEAVILY HEMOLYZED SERUM IS NOT ACCEPTABLE



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### **Communication**

If testing at your local hospital, please have your DVM contact you with the progesterone results as soon as they are available. Then, please email me at janicecain@comcast.net report the result to me. This is actually the most efficient method to be sure I am getting your test results. Please do not rely on faxes or copies of lab reports to be sent to me. If you test at BRVC, I will call you with results. If you are storing the serum, I will let you know when I need it. Serum can thaw during transport by owner, or shipped on regular ice-pack to BRVC for LH testing.