



Mon-Fri: 6:30am - 9:00pm

Sat-Sun: 7:30am - 6:00pm

Call Or Text Us: (925) 866-8387

2000 Bishop Drive | San Ramon, CA 94583

Ovulation Timing Information

Why ovulation timing (OT): The first day of the estrous cycle is defined as the first day of vaginal bleeding, designated day one of proestrus. There is a tremendous variation between bitches as to the length of proestrus and estrus, sexual receptivity, and ovulation. It is not possible to predict ovulation from evaluation of the color of discharge, firmness of the vulva, behavior of the bitch or stud dog, vaginal smear, or the number of days since the onset of proestrus. After natural breeding, it is possible for sperm to survive in the female tract for 3-or more days. After artificial insemination with fresh, chilled, or frozen semen or when breeding a sub-fertile bitch or stud dog, this time of sperm longevity can be greatly reduced. OT is done to ensure sperm are present when ova are ready for fertilization. OT is also VERY helpful to predict whelping dates more accurately!

Progesterone blood testing: The evaluation of serial blood progesterone levels prior to ovulation (during proestrus and early estrus) allows us to predict ovulation most accurately. Rather than wait until a specific level is reached, we evaluate the baseline, first rise, and rate of rise to determine ovulation. In general, values less than 1.0 are baseline, and increases to 1.5-2.5 are consistent with an initial rise, but this can vary greatly. Many bitches have progesterone levels that go up and down before completely rising. At the time of ovulation, progesterone levels range from 3.5 to 10. After ovulation, progesterone will continue to rise and will maintain high levels (>10) for approximately two months regardless of pregnancy status. Peak fertility is usually 4-5 days after the first rise.

Progesterone testing can be done anytime during regular office hours at the Bishop Ranch Veterinary Center. Once your dog is an established patient, you can schedule an appointment for the technician to draw the blood sample. All progesterone tests are sent to Idexx and results are usually available the next morning. Please leave an email to Dr. Vega at drvega@webvets.com to let him know your bitch has started her cycle.

Protocol: Begin progesterone testing by day 5-7 of proestrus (day 1 = the first day blood is seen). If there is any doubt, you can start sooner. We recommend progesterone testing every other day, until ovulation is confirmed by a rising and sustained elevated progesterone level. Food does not need to be withheld. Once the progesterone values are changing, Dr. Vega might ask you to start daily timing to be more specific in some cases.

Fees: Progesterone test: \$99/each

Pre-breeding exam \$86/per cycle