



The Golden Retriever Club of America, Inc.

Ectopic Ureter Study

Ectopic ureter (EU) is a congenital condition in which the lower end of one or both ureters (tubes that drain urine from the kidneys to the bladder) is connected in the wrong place. Females are affected more frequently than males, although males can also have EU. It is called “congenital” because affected puppies are born with the condition, but this does not automatically mean that it is inherited. However, because the condition is more common in some breeds than others -- including Golden Retrievers – there is a suspicion that it may be inherited. While a possible mode of inheritance is as yet unknown, it is probably prudent to avoid repeating a breeding that has produced a puppy with EU.

Dr Josh Stern and his genetics lab are investigating the genetics of EU in Golden Retrievers, and owners and breeders of affected dogs are requested to provide a DNA sample for this research. As always, complete confidentiality is assured. For instructions, please contact:

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Puppies affected with EU cannot fully control their urine (urinary incontinence), so urine leakage may keep the area persistently “wet.” However, this is often not discovered until after weaning, because attentive moms keep their puppies very clean! After weaning, the breeder may notice that the puppy is frequently wet and sticky, and the skin may become irritated from contact with urine.

Sometimes the condition is not identified until the puppy goes to its new home and housetraining begins. Because of the urinary incontinence, affected puppies cannot avoid accidents, and these puppies are often first suspected of having a urinary tract infection (UTI). And in fact, puppies with EU often do get urinary tract infections, but treating the UTI with antibiotics will not completely resolve the problem if the puppy has EU instead of an uncomplicated UTI.

Diagnosing EU usually requires testing such as radiographs with contrast (intravenous pyelogram, IVP), ultrasound, or cystoscopy. Correcting EU usually requires surgery, although some centers may offer advanced cystoscopic laser techniques to suitable candidates. An excellent discussion of EU, along with helpful diagrams and images, is online at <http://www.veterinarypartner.com/Content.plx?P=A&S=0&C=0&A=3001>

For additional information, please contact Rhonda Hovan at rhondahovan@aol.com