

Urination Likely a Sign of Separation Anxiety

If medical causes are ruled out, consider behavioral issues.

Jon Geller, DVM

Q. I need a second opinion about my 10-year-old Cocker Spaniel-Poodle mix. About a month ago she started drinking a lot of water and acting kind of crazy and aggressive.

One day she urinated on our bedroom carpet while we were at work. I took her to the vet, and he did blood tests and X-rayed her stomach. It showed nothing. He said it was something intestinal and to put her on a chicken and rice diet for 10 days. She seemed to get a little better but is still wetting in the house. She has also shredded our paper window blinds. I don't know what to do. I really think she may have a bladder or kidney problem.

A. This sounds like an interesting case. Your little dog is displaying what sounds like classic signs of separation anxiety in tearing up the window blinds, and her urination on the carpet may also be signs of her displeasure at being left alone.

However, if her urination is a medical problem, I would say your little dog has a urinary tract infection. It sounds like your veterinarian did blood work and X-rays, but I see no mention of a urinalysis being done.

Female puppies and middle-aged dogs are very susceptible to urinary tract infections, due to the anatomy of the urethra. In females, the urethra, the tube that connects the bladder to the outside world, is relatively short, and is prone to contamination due to its proximity to the excretions from the intestines (feces). Male dogs rarely get urinary tract infections.

Most urinary tract infections are caused by bacteria like E. Coli, and respond well to appropriate antibiotics.

Other possible causes of frequent urination, or straining to urinate, include bladder stones (which would have been seen on X-rays), kidney failure and diabetes (which would have been detected with bloodtests). A bladder tumor is also a possibility, and would require ultrasound to detect.

So there you have it. If your veterinarian has already done a urinalysis, and it was normal, it is probably a behavioral problem.

I enjoy the challenge of doing electronic diagnosis over the Internet. However, I always recommend that dog owners follow up with their regular veterinarians.

Good luck and thank you for your interesting question.

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