

Dog With Urinary Stones Needs Immediate Surgery

Toxins in the bloodstream from urinary stones can lead to death.

By Jon Geller, DVM

Q. I'm in real need of your help. My Pomeranian is 12 now, and last year we found that he has a problem while urinating. He puts up his leg, but is only able to leave a few drops of urine. It seems something is stopping the release of urine, so he goes everywhere anytime unconsciously. Whether he is walking or sleeping or sitting, it just keeps on falling drop by drop. The doctor said that he has a kidney stone problem. Injections and medication have not helped. He won't eat or drink and now has blood in his stool. The doctor said that we have tried our best, but if still he doesn't improve on the medicine, he will hardly survive four or five days.

A. I am very sorry to hear about your Pomeranian's urinary problems. This sounds like a true medical and surgical emergency, and unfortunately my answer may be too late to help you or your dog.

Male dogs that have difficulty urinating often have stones in their bladders. Unlike female dogs, they rarely get urinary tract infections. Kidney stones are rare, but bladder stones are fairly common.

In cases that have progressed to where a dog is unable to urinate, surgery, along with intravenous fluids, is required to remove the stones. Otherwise, urinary toxins back up in the bloodstream, leading to shock and eventually death. It sounds like your dog has lost his appetite, indicating the presence of these urinary toxins in his bloodstream.

Other causes of inability to urinate include bladder tumors or very small urethral stones. These stones also require anesthesia and a medical procedure to push them back into the bladder, where they must be surgically removed or dissolved. Bladder tumors are very difficult to treat surgically, and usually require chemotherapy and pain medications for some short-term benefit.

Sometimes with certain types of stones (struvite), they can be dissolved using a special urine-acidifying diet. However, this can take up to several weeks, and is only reserved for non-emergency cases.

Your dog needs emergency surgery as soon as possible. I hope you are able to find a veterinarian who can perform the procedure.