

Dog's Persistent Bladder Infections

'Holding it' all day can lead to infections.

By Jon Geller, DVM

Q. My 3-year-old spayed female Mixed Breed has a tendency toward bladder infections. My vet thinks it may be related to the fact that she is housebound all day while I'm at work and holds her urine too long. I can't afford doggie daycare, I have no one I'd trust in my house who is able to come over and let her out during the day, and in my "hood" a dog door is out of the question. Many of my coworkers have dogs who are left alone in the house all day, and their dogs never seem to have any bladder issues. Ruling out a serious underlying problem, are some dogs just more prone to bladder infections than others?

A. Some dogs are more prone to bladder infections, especially females. Most urinary-tract infections in female dogs occur when bacteria go up the urethra into the bladder. If a dog has anatomy that makes her more prone to bacterial contamination, for example from feces, she will get more infections.

Other anatomical abnormalities that cause urine pooling can lead to urinary-tract infections.

Finally, urine that sits in a bladder all day is more susceptible to bacterial infection, so if you can figure out a way to let your dog out during the day, the infections may go away.

In general, I would be concerned that the bacteria infecting your dog's bladder may become resistant to most antibiotics with repeated treatment.

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