

## Urine-leaking Collie May Need Medication

**Neutering occasionally leads to problems in males, though more typical in females.**

*Jon Geller, DVM*

Q. We have had our 14-month-old Collie mix, a lovely rescue named Milo, for three months. We have no problems with him as he seems to have been well trained before. He settled down with us very well although, understandably, he is still quite insecure when left on his own.

Milo has suddenly started wetting his bed. He first did it in the car on his blanket. Then, he did it again on his two beds at home, and again two days later.

It's only a small amount, and we're pretty sure he doesn't do it on purpose. We haven't made a fuss, but we are concerned. Is it behavioral or an indication of a bladder problem?

A. Unintentional leakage of urine is fairly common in female dogs, but rare in males. It usually is first noted after spaying or neutering, and results in a loss of sphincter tone at the urethral opening. The urethra is the tube that leads from the bladder to the urethral opening. The urethral sphincter is the muscle group that controls the voluntary aspect of urination.

The changes in hormonal balance following reproductive surgery affect the function of the urethral sphincter, and can result in unintentional leakage of urine while the dog is sleeping or lying down.

The treatment usually starts with a trial of phenylpropanolamine, a medication that can help increase urethral sphincter muscle control. In male dogs, other hormonal treatments such as testosterone may be required, but these can have negative side effects, so should be avoided in the initial treatment plan.

In some cases, an anatomical abnormality is responsible for leakage. These can only be diagnosed with an X-ray study where dye is injected into the urinary tract.

The first step, however, is a thorough exam with your veterinarian, including a urinalysis to rule out an infection. You could then discuss a trial prescription of phenylpropanolamine to see if it helps.