RETAINED DECIDUOUS TEETH, RETAINED TESTICLES AND UMBILICAL HERNIA

Retained deciduous teeth

Puppies normally have 28 deciduous (baby) teeth that erupt during the first six months of life. Adult dogs have 42 permanent teeth that erupt between 4 and 7 months of age. The roots of the deciduous teeth resorb in order for the teeth to become loose and fall out. This allows the permanent teeth to erupt normally.

When deciduous (baby) teeth don’t fall out to make way for the permanent teeth, they are called retained deciduous teeth. Retained deciduous teeth should be extracted surgically soon after they are discovered because they will cause dental problems. When both deciduous and permanent teeth are trying to occupy the same position, this double row of teeth overcrowds the mouth, and food gets trapped between the teeth. This trapped food causes periodontal disease (tartar, plaque build up, gingivitis, gum recession and pain). If the tooth isn’t extracted early enough, there is a greater chance that the adult tooth will be malpositioned. Malpositioned teeth can cause damage to the tongue, palate, mandible, etc.

Cryptorchidism (Retained testicles)

During foetal development, both testicles normally migrate from their intra-abdominal position towards their respective inguinal canals located in the inguinal regions. After birth, the testicles further migrate out of the inguinal ring, then under the skin and into their respective scrotum.
Cryptorchidism is a condition in which a male’s testicles have not descended (dropped) into the scrotum. One or both testicle are then retained somewhere in the migration pathway.

Cryptorchidism is a fairly common defect in dogs, especially small breeds such as Yorkshire Terrier, Pomeranian, and French Poodle. Because of its genetic nature, if an animal is cryptorchid, he should not be used for breeding. Dogs with cryptorchid testicles are prone to testicular torsion and testicular cancer, so these dogs should be neutered to prevent problems later. Unfortunately, many pets are born each year with this problem since canine and feline breeding is not regulated.

**Umbilical hernia**

The umbilicus, or belly button, is where the umbilical cord attaches when the puppy or kitten is in the womb. The umbilical cord carries nutrition and oxygen from the mother to the fetus, and waste products and carbon dioxide from the fetus to the mother. Normally, after the puppy or kitten is born, the cord breaks, and the connection at the umbilicus closes up.

An umbilical hernia occurs when the hole doesn’t close correctly and in which abdominal contents (fat, intestines, etc.) protrude past the abdominal. Umbilical hernias are diagnosed on physical examination, a lump is palpated under the skin at the umbilical region.

Most hernias, especially large ones should be repaired surgically, because there is a risk that the abdominal contents inside the hernia sac could become damaged or strangulated. Strangulation of intestinal loops can cause blood flow restriction to the intestine, intestinal blockage, etc. Congenital (present from birth) umbilical hernias are more common in puppies than in kittens. The exact cause of congenital umbilical hernias is unknown, but it is generally thought to be a hereditary condition most commonly seen in small breeds.

The veterinarian will recommend correcting the umbilical hernia and the extraction of the deciduous teeth at the same time of the sterilization. The correction of a cryptorchid testicle (s) that is retained in a difficult place to access can add complexity to the procedure. In the case of extracting deciduous teeth, dental x-rays, suturing the gums, and the administration of pain medication could be necessary. These procedures add extra cost because of the prolonged anesthesia as well as the extra time and expertise of the veterinarian to correct the abnormalities. Even with the extra costs it is still financially and medically advantageous to have the corrective procedures done at the same time of the neutering rather than doing it at an ulterior time.

**Conclusion:**

Small breed dogs are very popular for many reasons. Having a small dog, theoretically costs less than a larger breed, for example the consumption and the cost of food. Also, veterinarian fees are associated by weight (medication, anesthesia etc.) sterilization will cost less than a larger dog. The medical findings discussed previously are very common medical abnormalities in veterinary medicine that can be detected during the physical exam in preparation for the sterilization.

Références : VIN (Veterinary international network)