

INTESTINAL Abnormalities

Mega-Oesophagus

Congenital Mega-oesophagus - Inherited, seen in various breeds including the GSD (possibly an autosomal dominant with incomplete penetration.). These present at around 4-5 weeks of age when solid feeds are started. The typical picture is one of vomiting within 5-10 minutes of eating, puppies affected are often small and weedy due to lack of adequate food getting through to the stomach. Many have a dilation of the throat after eating and a persistent gurgle.

There are two basic types of congenital mega-oesophagus :

1. Persistent Right Aortic Arch (PRAA) - This is actually a vascular abnormality that results in constriction of the oesophagus over the base of the heart, causing a build up of food forward of the obstruction. These puppies can be surgically corrected (but usually not under 8-10 weeks of age) but care must be taken as some of these puppies may have true mega-oesophagus as well and others already overstretched of the upper section of the oesophagus which may continue to cause problems. Unfortunately some of these puppies may be euthanased.

2. Mega-oesophagus - These puppies have a grossly dilated oesophagus affecting the entire length of the oesophagus. These cases often have secondary chest infections due to vomiting and regurgitation. Unfortunately, these puppies may have to be euthanased due to severe health issues.

Mega-oesophagus (Acquired) - This condition can develop in the older animal from a variety of reasons, rarely seen under about 8-9 year of age.

Updated 27/7/14

