



## Anal Glands

There are many “old wives tales” still around. One of the most common is that a pet has “worms” because they are scooting on their rear end. Although some pets will scoot when they have parasites, more often than not they are scooting because of the anal glands. This is a very classic sign that your pet needs their anal glands expressed and has nothing to do with intestinal parasites.

### **What are they?**

- ~ Small scent glands located just inside the pet's anus (about 4 & 8 o'clock)
- ~ Produces a foul-smelling liquid-like material
- ~ Most pets express (empty) these glands naturally with normal bowel movements
- ~ If not expressed naturally, these glands become full and will need to be expressed manually, most owners choose to have this done by a professional.

### **Why is my pet scooting?**

- ~ When anal glands are full, they become very uncomfortable and sometimes painful
- ~ Pets will scoot, chew, lick the backend and even “chase their tail” trying to relieve the discomfort and pressure
- ~ Some pets will continue this behavior even after having glands expressed because of the inflammation caused by the full glands – this will usually go away within 24-48 hours

### **How often should I have my pets glands expressed?**

- ~ **Each pet is different!!**
- ~ Some pets need their glands expressed on a regular schedule, about every 4-6 weeks
- ~ Other pets may only need expressed once or twice in their whole life
- ~ Best to let your pet tell you with their behavior when they need help expressing their glands

### **Impacted Glands:**

- ~ Some pets will produce a very thick or paste-like material
- ~ This makes it difficult or impossible for pets to express on their own
- ~ Glands become impacted, or VERY FULL, and are extremely uncomfortable
- ~ Will need expressed manually and possibly need medication for the pain and inflammation

### **Infected or Abscessed Glands:**

- ~ If impacted glands are not expressed they can become infected and even abscess
- ~ Some glands will rupture out through the skin; this is the body's way of relieving the pressure
- ~ This is VERY painful for the pet
- ~ Will require treatment of the wound (if ruptured), pain medication and antibiotics for the infection

### **Surgical Removal of Anal Glands:**

- ~ Surgery to remove the glands is possible, but ONLY in severe chronic cases as a last resort
- ~ After exhausting all other options, this decision should only be made after consulting with Dr. Logue and/or a referral surgeon.
- ~ This is a major surgery that could cause other medical conditions to develop
  - Most common is stool incontinence – the inability to control their bowels