

False Pregnancy

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Overview

False pregnancy (pseudocyesis) is a term used to describe the behavior and physical signs of pregnancy when they occur in a non-pregnant animal. The signs of false pregnancy usually occur 6 to 12 weeks after the pet's last heat cycle. It is caused by hormonal changes. This condition is common in dogs but rare in cats.

Diagnosis and Treatment Notes:

- False pregnancy is generally diagnosed by proving the animal is not truly pregnant. This is done with a thorough history and physical examination, abdominal x-rays and possibly an abdominal ultrasound.
- Most pets with false pregnancy do not require treatment. Typically, the pet will spontaneously return to normal within 2 to 3 weeks. Spaying will prevent future occurrences but will not eliminate the signs of the current false pregnancy. Discuss treatment details with your veterinarian when your pet is diagnosed with this condition.

What to Watch for*:

- Nesting behavior
- Mothering activity
- Mammary gland enlargement

Please notify us if you notice any of the above signs or if you have any questions!