

子宮蓄膿症 高槻市東田獣医科 岩猿 仁子

子宮蓄膿症は、文字どおり子宮の中に膿が溜まる恐ろしい病気です。犬、猫の雌でみられますが、この病気が動物の発情周期とホルモンの影響に深く関わっているため、特に中年～高齢の雌犬で一般的です。

いつも元気だった雌犬が、歳のせいかなんとか元気がない、食欲が落ちた、そういえば朝吐いていた、というような訴えで来院されることがあります。よくお話を伺っていると、一ヶ月前に発情していた、この頃水ばかり飲んでいる、お腹が張っているなどかなり特徴的な症状があることがわかります。年齢もだいたい7歳以上で避妊手術もしていないとなると、真っ先に頭に浮かんでくるのが子宮蓄膿症です。陰部から排膿しているとなるとほぼ確実です。

発情中に開いた子宮口から細菌が侵入し、子宮の中で細菌感染がおこり膿が溜まってしまうため、様々な症状がでます。普通発情の2～3週間後に症状が現れ始め、数週間にわたりじわじわと進行していきます。症状が進むと敗血症でショック状態に陥ってしまうこともあります。細菌毒素に



よる腎不全や肝機能障害も起こり生命にかかわる状態になります。陰部からの排膿は無いことも多く、わずかな量ですと気がつかないこともあります。発情が終わってしばらく経つのに陰部を気にしてなめているような場合には注意が必要です。

診断は、上記のような症状と合わせ、血液検査、X線検査、超音波検査などを組合せて行い、感染を示す血液像や拡大した子宮を確認することで下します。

治療は、「卵巣子宮全摘出術」という手術で卵巣と蓄膿子宮をとってしまうのが最も一般的です。全身状態が悪いため、術前術後の点滴や抗生剤の投与など充分に行なう必要がありますが、手術を行えば二度と再発することはありません。手術に耐えられない程状態が悪い場合や繁殖能力を残すためには、内科療法を行なう場合もありますが、再発の可能性や薬の副作用による危険性をともないます。

このように恐い子宮蓄膿症ですが、若くて健康なうちに避妊手術をしておけば心配いりません。まだ避妊手術をしていない子で、出産させる予定がないのなら、高齢犬の仲間入りをする前にもう一度避妊手術について考えてみられてはいかがでしょうか？

Uterine Empyema by Hitoko Iwasaru, Higashida Veterinary Clinic

Uterine empyema is a terrible disease in which pus collects inside the uterus. It is closely related to the oestrous cycle and hormones, and occurs in female dogs and cats, with middle-aged to elderly bitches particularly susceptible.

We often have people bring in a female dog saying she'd always been very lively, but lately, perhaps due to age, she seemed listless, was losing her appetite, and occasionally throwing up in the morning. As we listen to their stories, it often emerges that she had been in heat a month before, that these days she seems to be drinking water all the time, and that her belly looks swollen. These are characteristic symptoms of uterine empyema, and if the dog is more than 7 years old and has not been spayed, this disease is our primary suspect. If the owner reports pus draining from the dog's genitalia, we are virtually positive.

During oestrus, the cervix opens up, making it easier for bacteria to enter the uterus. If such an infection occurs, pus will collect inside the uterus and give rise to a number of symptoms. These generally start appearing two to three weeks after oestrus, and continue to worsen gradually. As the disease progresses, it can lead to shock brought on by septicemia, or blood poisoning. Other life-threatening consequences include kidney failure and liver dysfunction caused by bacterial toxins. Often there is no pus leaking from the genitalia, and even if there is, it may be so small an amount as to

escape the owner's notice. If, some time after her last oestrus is ended, your dog seems to be licking her genitals much more than usual, this may be a warning sign.

If the above symptoms are present, blood tests, X-rays and ultrasound tests are conducted for a full diagnosis. Uterine empyema is diagnosed if the blood test indicates infection and the uterus appears enlarged.

The most common treatment method is a total hysterectomy, in which both ovaries and the infected uterus are removed. This is a major operation requiring an intravenous drip and antibiotics both before and after surgery, but once these organs are removed, the disease will never occur again. Internal treatment is occasionally used, for cases where the animal's condition is too weak to withstand surgery or continued reproductive capability is desired, but then there is no guarantee against reoccurrence of the disease, and side effects of the drugs used can endanger the animal's health.

Terrible though uterine empyema is, it can easily be prevented. If an animal is spayed while she is still young and healthy, there is no fear of her ever contracting this disease. If your pet is female and has not yet been neutered, and if you do not plan for her to have puppies, we strongly recommend that you take her to your vet to be spayed.

Don't wait until it is too late.