

What are anal sacs?

The anal sacs are small secretory glands located alongside the anus at the four o'clock and eight o'clock position. The glands empty into the anus through small ducts. They produce a foul smelling secretion. These are the same glands that make a skunk a skunk. The material in the anal sac may accumulate and solidify. Bacteria that are present in the area can then cause an infection.

Can anal sacs cause problems for my pet?

Yes, there are several problems that can occur. First, the fluid may become thickened and solidify, leading to a condition called an impaction. The bacteria that are naturally present in that area can produce an infection. Pus collects in the anal sac and forms an abscess. The area becomes tender and swollen and the skin over the anal sac breaks open so that the pus may drain out.

How do I know if there is a problem with my pet's anal sacs?

Symptoms of analsacculitis include excessive licking or grooming under the tail, scooting and dragging the anal area on the ground, generalized pain or swelling around the anal area, and finally any bloody, or foul discharge from the area.

Can Anal Sac disease be treated?

Yes, the treatment depends on the problem. If there is just an impaction your veterinarian can clean out the anal sacs. If there is an infection, the sacs must be cleaned out, and antibiotics given. More serious conditions, such as an abscess may require surgery.

Once the problem is treated does it ever come back?

Unfortunately, sometimes the problem can reoccur. The smaller breeds tend to have more problems. The same is true for overweight or inactive dogs. If the problem occurs more than a few times, you may want to discuss having your veterinarian surgically removed the anal sacs. This assures your pet a solution to the problem.

Why does my dog sometimes leave a foul-smelling liquid where it has been lying?

That is the normal secretion produced by the anal sac. If the problem is chronic you may want to discuss having your veterinarian surgically removed them. Some dogs have anal canals that do not close, so the material leaks out. These dogs are constantly leaving a foul discharge wherever they have been. Discuss anal sac removal with your veterinarian since there is no other way to eliminate this.