

Canine Neonatal Mortality at the São Paulo State University Veterinary Hospital, Botucatu, São Paulo, Brazil - Preliminary Data

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Abstract : The neonatal mortality rates in dogs are considered high, varying between 5.7 and 21.2% around the world, and the causes of the deaths are often unknown. Data regarding canine neonatal mortality are scarce in Brazil. This study aims at describing the neonatal mortality rates in dogs, as well as the main causes of death. The study included 152 litters and 669 neonates admitted to the São Paulo State University (UNESP) Veterinary Hospital, Botucatu, São Paulo, Brazil between January 2018 and September 2019. The overall mortality rate was 16.7% (112/669), with 40% (61/152) of the litters presenting at least one case of stillbirth or neonatal mortality. The rate of stillbirths was 7.7% (51/669), while the neonatal mortality rate was 9% (61/669). The early mortality rate (0 to 2 days) was 13.7% (92/669), accounting for 82.1% (92/112) of all deaths. The late mortality rate (3 to 30 days) was 2.7% (18/669), accounting for 16% (18/112) of all deaths. Infection was the causa mortis in 51.8% (58/112) of the newborns, of which 30.3% (34/112) were caused by bacterial sepsis, and 21.4% (24/112) were caused by other bacterial, viral or parasite infections. Other causes of death included congenital malformations (15.2%, 17/112), of which 5.3% (6/112) happened through euthanasia due to malformations incompatible with life; asphyxia/hypoxia by dystocia (9.8%, 11/112); wasting syndrome in debilitated newborns (6.2%, 7/112); aspiration pneumonia (3.6%, 4/112); agalactia (2.7%, 3/112); trauma (1.8%, 2/112); administration of contraceptives to the mother (1.8%, 2/112) and unknown causes (7.1%, 8/112). The neonatal mortality rate was considered high, but they may be even higher in locations without adequate care for the mothers and neonates. Therefore, prenatal examinations and early neonatal care are of utmost importance for the survival of these patients.

Keywords : neonate dogs, puppies, mortality rate, neonatal death

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