

## **Incidence of Orphans Neonatal Puppies Attend in Veterinary Hospital - Causes, Consequences and Mortality**

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**Abstract :** Orphaned is a risk factor for mortality in newborns since it is a condition with total or partial absence of maternal care that is essential for neonatal survival, including nursing (nutrition, the transference of passive immunity and hydration), warmth, urination, and defecation stimuli, and protection. The most common causes of mortality in orphans are related to lack of assistance, handling mistakes and infections. This study aims to describe the orphans rates in neonatal puppies, the main causes, and the mortality rates. The study included 735 neonates admitted to the Sao Paulo State University (UNESP) Veterinary Hospital, Botucatu, Sao Paulo, Brazil, between January 2018 and November 2019. The orphans rate was 43.4% (319/735) of all neonates included, and the main causes for orphaned were related to maternal agalactia/hypogalactia (23.5%, 75/319); numerous litter (15.7%, 50/319), toxic milk syndrome due to maternal mastitis (14.4%, 46/319), absence of suction/weak neonate (12.2%, 39/319), maternal disease (9.4%, 30/319), cleft palate/lip (6.3%, 20/319), maternal death (5.9%, 19/319), prematurity (5.3%, 17/319), rejection/failure in maternal instinct (3.8%, 12/319) and abandonment by the owner/separation of mother and neonate (3.5%, 11/319). The main consequences of orphaned observed in the admitted neonates were hypoglycemia, hypothermia, dehydration, aspiration pneumonia, wasting syndrome, failure in the transference of passive immunity, infections and sepsis, which happened due to failure of identifying the problem early, lack of adequate assistance, negligence and handling mistakes by the owner. The total neonatal mortality rate was 8% (59/735) and the neonatal mortality rate among orphans was 18.5% (59/319). The orphaned and mortality rates were considered high, but even higher rates may be observed in locations without adequate neonatal assistance and owner orientation. The survival of these patients is related to constant monitoring of the litter, early diagnosis and assistance, and the implementation of effective handling for orphans. Understanding the correct handling for neonates and instructing the owners regarding proper handling are essential to minimize the consequences of orphaned and the mortality rates.

**Keywords :** orphans, neonatal care, puppies, newborn dogs

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