

Planning to breed your broodbitch?

If she is 2-5 years old, this study may be for you.

Does body condition affect fertility and reproductive performance in the bitch?

Our study aims to answer this question as we are striving to give objective and evidence-based recommendations to our clients, breeders and veterinarians. For this study, we are looking for medium to large breed bitches who are lean or overweight/obese to evaluate the effects of body condition on fertility, pregnancy, and whelping. We will also be examining weight in conjunction with nutrition and exercise.

Participants will be asked to participate in:

- Our routine breeding management program
- 9 separate in-clinic visits throughout gestation and post-whelping (2-3 for standard of care visits, 6-7 for research collections)
- Fitness tracking with a provided FitBark 2 activity monitor (which is also fun!)
- Weekly activity and nutrition journal monitoring throughout breeding, gestation and post-whelping
- Detailed monitoring of the whelping
- A commitment to rebreed on the following cycle or after one cycle break.
- A controlled weight loss program before rebreeding under our supervision with a clinical nutritionist (overweight participants only)

Location

- All appointments will be at the **Veterinary Teaching Hospital of Virginia-Maryland CVM in Blacksburg, Virginia.**

Is your dog eligible?

- 2-5 years old
- Medium to large breed
- No current medical conditions
- Weight unchanged for **at least 6 months**
- **No** homemade/ raw diet
- Planning to breed for **two** cycles
- Proven breeder or maiden with no familial history of infertility.

If you're unsure if your bitch meets the requirements, or if you would like to know more about the study, please email Dr. Sam McCarter and Dr. Orsolya Balogh at whelping@vt.edu

Participants will receive:

- Full initial bloodwork and urinalysis
- One large bag of Purina Proplan Sport 30/20 (feeding not required for study)
- Pregnancy diagnosis ultrasounds
- Pre-Whelping Radiograph