

This is a series of questions that have been asked of club members. All answers come from club members and are personal advice of those members based on their own personal experiences.

Please remember, in cases of medical issues, we strongly recommend you consult with your own veterinarian and your own breeder and follow your own instincts.

We offer these only as anecdotal stories and advice by other Neapolitan Mastiff breed fans and as a starting point for your own quest for information in the wonderful world of the Mastino!

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## *How Do I become a Member of your club?*

### **Answer 1:**

The process to join the club can be very simple. We even have one membership type called Subscriber Member (you subscribe to the purposes of the club) for people who don't already know anyone in the club.

There is a form (it's on the website ...put your mouse over the menu item "resources" and then click on Downloadable forms. Select Member application and print it out)

To become a Subscriber Member, you fill out the form and send it in with the fee. Your name is read at two board meetings and then the board votes to approve applicants. Subscriber Member is not a voting membership, and you cannot run for elected office, but you would truly be a member of the club, get all club mailings, and get to know people within the club!

If you already know two club members (who live at different addresses) who would be willing to endorse (sponsor) you, you can apply for Full Membership. It's the same form, but you have to send a Sponsor Form to your two sponsors, who fill it out about you too. Same fee, send all paperwork with the fee, the process is similar, your name is read at two board meetings, and you're voted on by the board.

Full Membership is a voting membership, and Full Members who are already Full Members at the end of the year, and who renew in January can run for elected office too.

In either case, why not consider coming to the National Specialty. (See info about this on the home page—click on the link for National Specialty) You'll meet lots of people and even if you don't show dogs it can be a GREAT time to see other dogs, and to have an entire weekend of nuttin' but Neo's! Very exciting for us all!

## *Can the Neapolitan Mastiff live in a hot climate?*

### **Answer 1:**

You ask an interesting question. Yes, of course, this breed can exist in very hot weather. The dogs do adapt to what they are used to and in this country we have very hot areas as well and people with dogs live there although it takes care and caution.

People often take advantage of air-conditioning in their kennels, or "mistlers" running overhead to spray light "rain" on the areas periodically.

It's not easy, of course, these are giant dogs, heavy and thick-bodied and they do feel the heat far more than lighter-boned, tighter-skinned animals, but it is possible. You just have to be careful and aware of the dog's needs!

*I'm Interested in buying a puppy. How can I find a breeder or someone to talk to?*

**Answer 1:**

The club's website is a list of all current club members, and those who have indicated they can be contacted for these sorts of things have provided phone number or email or both. You can see this list and print it out by going to the club's website clicking on Club Info (from the menu on the top) and then click on Club Members (from the drop-down menu.)

You can save and print this list and do feel free to contact everyone / anyone.

Not everyone is a breeder but everyone is a lover of the breed and everyone knows someone, if you know what I mean.

In regards to price or shipping arrangements, you will have to talk to each person to discuss price or arrangements for acquiring or purchasing or shipping and stuff like that. Everyone is different and lots depends on individual circumstances.

You should know that recently the US Government Dept. of Agriculture passed a new law that affects people selling dogs where the \$ are received from the buyer before the buyer sees the dogs and this may make a difference in making arrangements when people are buying dogs from long-distance. See more information about this on the AKC website ([www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org)).

## An Indelicate Problem – eating Poop!

Well I don't know how to put it more delicately than this but when we first got our boy and for about 2 months after he would eat his own poop. At first we thought maybe his diet was wrong but after careful consideration we are sure it's not. Now I watch him like a hawk now so I don't give the chance for him to even if he were so inclined. But I was wondering if anyone else has ever gone through that and what do you do?

### **Answer 1:**

My first boy used to do that too. He also had an appetite for cat litter and its contents. Eventually, he decided that dog food and people food was much tastier although I think secretly he always craved cat litter. Anyway, I have heard that dogs eat their poopies due to a deficiency. This could be true - this could be false. But my first Neo was a pet store boy so maybe he ate his poopies because while he was in his crate they were his to eat? Who knows?

### **Answer 2:**

My Mastino Loves to sneak on the back porch and go for the Kitty Krispy's (cat litter). I don't get it, it's totally disgusting. So I have to make sure the door is always closed and he goes straight in and straight out. The worst part is the stuff sticks in his teeth and sloppy jaws. UGH! My vet said it's something certain dogs like and just try to keep them away, or it could get them sick. To my knowledge he has never went after his own "treasures", I think he likes leaving them in the yard to warn off predators!! Hopefully, your boy will learn there are much better things to eat...

### **Answer 3:**

I got a 50 cent package of "Forbid" from my vet. You mix it in their food and their poop smells so bad they don't want to eat it anymore. It works great. I always have to have some on hand for new puppies.

### **Answer 3:**

I have a Standard Poodle that eats one of my other dogs poop. I have 5 dogs, but she only likes the poo of the one??? I don't get it. I just go out to the kennel with them when I let them outside to make sure she doesn't eat it. Go figure she is the biggest licker that I have too. Loves to LICK LICK LICK people. Yuck. Mine also like the cat box. We lovingly refer to that as salted kitty rolls! Our cat box is tucked away in the storage room with a kitty door so the dogs can't get at it...

### **Answer 3:**

My boy seems to like eating his poop too. He gets a lot of good food (Health wise Puppy with yogurt) so I'm not sure what the reason is. I'm hoping he'll just grow out of it. He really seems to do it most when he is in his indoor kennel and we have not noticed the poop.

### **Answer 4:**

Well we have found that S.E.P. (Stop Eating Poop) from Solid Gold worked for us. Our younger boy loves his poop. Also, we make sure to clean their outside kennels about 3-4 times a day. Also, we started to watch him like a hawk when we let him out to his kennel. I must say the worst thing in the world is to have your Neo come inside and lay those WET POOP FILLED lips on your lap after they ate their stool!!! Hope some of this helps you out!

### **Answer 5;**

this has been an age old problem for dogs for many many years. The official name is called "Coprophagia". Lots of info if you search the web on this subject. Many reasons this happens too. I know firsthand that Forbid works very well. S.E.P. from Solid Gold is a new product to me, worth a try. I know that PROZYME a digestive aide has worked well for some dogs that need better digestion of their daily food. The better the food the better they use the nutrients in their food. That could help too.

## *Swollen Stomach?*

My female has a very swollen stomach as if she is pregnant. But she cannot be because she was fixed. She has lost about 15 pounds in the last year, she just had all her blood work and annual checkup done and everything looked good. But this past week her belly is big and she looks pregnant. She has a vet appointment in the morning, does anybody have any opinions of what could be wrong. She seems happy and acts normal.

### ***Follow-up 1:***

Well I'm sorry to say that my poor girl is in advanced stages of heart failure. The fluid is backing up in the stomach that is why her belly is swollen. She is going to go a cardiologist this week to see if they can give a new medicine to help her out. Hopefully she will pull through

### ***Follow-up 2:***

My girl is fighting like a champ she is not going to give up. The cardiologist put her on 6 different medicines and a new one from the UK that has not yet been approved by the FDA in the US. Pimobendan has had good success rate among dogs with cardio myopathy. So we will see how well she does. She is still in good spirits. Thanks for everybody's concerns and prayers. I lost my first male last May and I am not ready to lose another one.

## *Ulcer on the Eye?*

It's nearly 2 am here. It looks to me like my Mastino's left eye is ulcerated?! He only opens it when he is alerted to something. It looks like there is tissue hanging and stuck to his eyeball. Maybe he tore something in there with all of the rubbing? Going to the vet first thing in the morning.

HELP PLEASE!

Does anyone have recommendations on what to do or not do? What should we expect to hear from the vet? If it requires surgery, please tell me about proper anesthesia dosage and type for neos one more time so I'm sure I've got it right. Our vet has zero experience with neos.

### ***Answer 1:***

Sorry I have no advice to offer. I will say though, that my old Great Dane got a HUGE scratch on his eye, had trouble opening it and the whole works, mattering, tearing, etc. It eventually healed itself after I quit treating it with the meds that the vet gave me. Good luck.

### ***Answer 2:***

It could be any number of things. Sometimes they get a scratch on the eye. Sometimes it's just an irritation. You do want to know the cause, because if it's an ulcerated eye some of the drops will make it worse.....

Odds are that if it's a scratch on the eye caused by an accident, while painful, it will probably heal by itself. If it's something that's caused by repeated irritation, like entropion, or something stuck under the eyelid, it will just get worse.

The cloudiness is generally a response to irritation, I've seen cloudy eyes get better, with treatment.

Very odd that your vet would ask what kind of dog this is. Eye problems have little to do with breed type!

### ***Answer 3:***

Hi! My Neapolitan was scratched in the eye by my new puppy. I noticed he was squinting excessively on 1 side and at first I actually thought he has lost his eye but he was just squinting so tightly that the eyeball was impossible to see. After finally getting him to let me pry his eye open and look I noticed a large scratch in the smooth surface of the eyeball. The vet put in drops that stain the eye and looked at it in the dark with a black light. The scratch was very noticeable. He prescribed drops to soothe it and had I come back every few days to re-stain it and check the healing.

After several visits to check it and no improvement my vet decided to tack the eye enough to keep the weight of the wrinkles off it. He put him under just enough to put in a couple stitches to hold it open better. He could still close it and blink but not squint and wrinkle it up. It healed in 2 days after that and the stitches came out without need for more sedation. I would ask to have it stained and checked with the black light. This is standard procedure with a human eye injury too.

### ***Answer 4:***

Does it look like a piece of skin with hair is attached to his eyeball? If so this could be a dermoid it is very rare and is not hereditary or so my vet said. He made a very big deal about it took pictures of it, put it on the screen and called in all the other vets to look at it. He acted like a kid in a candy store, I was freaking out by then. We had it removed once and he goes back to have it

done again on Monday. His eye is always full of nasty gunk. It is not entropion the actual eyelash is not turned in rubbing his eye. He actually has a piece of skin attached with hair on it.

**Answer 5;**

I have been through something similar to you, here's what we did that WORKED in the end. She somehow scratched her eye and developed a "corneal ulcer" which looked like a foggy patch in the center of her eye and kept blinking and rubbing it. I took her to the vet and they did a Flourescein Eye Stain to see if they could see how severe it was. It was pretty bad and did not get better over the course of a week.

It did not heal with antibiotics so we took her back. They said, "Oh it looks to have healed around the edges and that means the center will not heal and you'll have to take her to a specialist to have the whole thing scraped off completely and start over with the healing process". This would have cost thousands and still no guarantee it would have worked. Finally saw another vet who prescribed "prednizone" (not sure on the spelling but it's an oral steroid and I'm sorry I can't remember the dosage.) and Gentocin ophth. Ointment and Atropine Ointment. Worked within a day but we did finish the three day RX.

We'd tried the ointments before but it wasn't until we used them with the oral steroid that it actually healed. PS we've used this one our other dog when she got a scratch on her eye and it healed it up too! Good stuff!! Good luck. It's worth a try.

**Follow-up:**

Went to the vet and the left cornea is ulcerated. The stain under the black light took up all of the iris. The vet says that he believes that it is superficial. The drops we had been using did contain a steroid which could make it worse. He changed him to an antibacterial ointment to keep the eye lubricated and suggested we see a specialist.

I'll be making an appointment today. I do have a few more questions...

Is it possible that the entropion can improve as he gets older? I've read this in a book. It said that neos are more prone to eye issues between 8-13 months and that they usually resolve.

If this were your dog, would you have the entropion surgery (he is 13 months old) or try meds and have the eye tacked temporarily?

## *Questions about Entropion*

We were told that if our dog has the surgery to fix his entropion then he should not be shown and should be fixed because the condition is hereditary. What do you think?

### **Answer 1:**

Entropion is where the eyelashes are situated such that they are not on top of the eyelid, but are down a bit and can irritate the eye. The extent of entropion varies, sometimes it's just a little, and the dog can have occasional irritation, sometimes it's a lot.

With most breeds of dogs, the eyelid is "tight" to the eyeball to keep "chaff" and stuff out of the eye as the dog runs in the fields and woods and dirt and stuff. And so, with most breeds any amount of entropion causes irritation on the eye. With the mastino, though, the eyelid is looser around the eye and sometimes a "little" amount of entropion doesn't cause problems.

It's a construction issue, and yes, it is generally hereditary, just like any other construction issue. We don't want entropion, no one does. If you had a dog with really bad entropion causing tearing and eye problems, you don't want to breed at all. Get the surgery to fix it and don't breed.

With our breed, sometimes the eyelid construction isn't perfect but it doesn't cause a problem. If your dog's eyes aren't really impacted, and you do want to breed your dog because of other good issues in the dog, you should really make sure that you breed it to a dog with really really really good eyes so that the puppies won't have the problem.

If you do chose to breed your dog despite the slight problem, you need to keep a good track of the puppies to make sure THEIR eyes are good too. If you do breed the animal, and you find that your dog passes on the poor eyes to the offspring, you should not breed it again. AND if you DO choose to breed your dog even if the puppy eyes seem ok, you really should make sure the new owners of the puppies know that one parent did have this slight problem so THEY can keep track of their own dog's eyes and, if they chose to breed, that they know to make sure their dog's offspring eyes too! That's the ethical thing to do!

On the other hand, if you don't want to pass on that information (that you chose to breed a dog with this problem) maybe you shouldn't chose to breed that dog.

The AKC has a rule that any dog that has undergone surgery to correct a genetic construction issue cannot be shown, so the basic answer to your question is yes, if the dog has surgery, he should not be shown.

Reality is, however, that now vets can do surgery so well that there is no way to tell that it's been done. Is it right for you to show such a dog? Well, you tell me!

We all know that there have been dogs that have had the surgery and been shown. In lots of breeds. It's sort of the don't ask, don't tell issue. If your purpose in showing is to have fun, this isn't really a horrible thing.

The problem with this is in the future breeding. If you do the surgery and then never tell anyone, people are going to assume that the eyes are good, and they might want to breed their semi-ok-eye dog to yours, thinking that the pups will be better off, and in fact they'll be worse off. If they come to your champion dog that's been campaigned all around and is appearing on TV and all that.....well, then you're doing damage to the breed by either indiscriminately breeding or by not telling people. If you do show a dog with "fixed" eyes, and then someone wants to breed to your dog, you have now put yourself in an ethical dilemma....if you don't tell them the truth, you're being rather "unethical" by doing the breed a dis-service. If you do tell them the truth, you're also telling them that you purposely and knowingly broke AKC's rules by showing a dog that had

surgery to alter its appearance, again being unethical.

In lots of breeds if a dog has ANY entropion, it's spayed / neutered, eyes fixed, and not bred or shown. This would be the case in a breed where the entropion is a bigger problem for the breed (all the terriers, sporting, and working, herding dogs and most of the hounds too) and where the breed population is big enough that finding a dog with good eyes and other stellar characteristics isn't a problem.

In our breed. Well, it's not easy. Our breed population is pretty small. And the population of dogs and bitches where you really really really KNOW the background is smaller still. Many people are breeding dogs where they really only know the parents, if that. It's a whole different ballgame if you're on your fourth or fifth or sixth generation where you have bred the parents and grand-parents and so on. Then you KNOW more about what's occurred, what's been passed on, what the littermates of your dog have or had or don't have.

Does it get better or worse as the dog gets older? Well, it does or can change. Sometimes better, more often worse, though. If it's bad enough at this young age that the eye is actually ulcerated now, that's pretty bad. To have the eyes actually ulcerated...well, go see the expert, but you'll probably need to have the eyes fixed.

Can you show after that? Well, you CAN. But the real question is if you SHOULD. Can you breed after that? Well, again, you CAN. But the question is if you SHOULD.

To me, the question can easily be answered: If you are not willing to tell the owners of the new puppies that one of the parents had this eye issue that had to be fixed w/surgery and their puppy may develop the same condition, or pass it on. Then, no you should NOT breed that dog. Find a better one.

**Answer 2:**

I do not think you are ever going to solve this problem until you have the entropies surgery done. The meds and tacking are just a quick and temporary fix. To me it is not worth risking my dog's vision. You need to go to a specialist to have his surgery done though. A lot of your everyday vets will tell you they can do the surgery...do not listen to them. Find an ophthalmologist. It really is not a big deal if done right. As for showing ....just hope he does not scar. If you go to somebody that knows what they are doing you should not have to worry about scaring.

## *Dog is limping, what should I do?*

My dog is limping today. After inspection his left front ankle is swollen, it's probably sprained. Should I treat it like a human sprain and wrap and do cold and hot treatments? Is it severe enough that I have to take him to the vet?

### **Answer 1:**

I always play it safe- when in doubt, take 'em in! Neos are very stoic- it may be worse than he is letting on-JMHO

### **Answer 2:**

I would do ice if it is real swollen. Don't give any pain meds until your vet gives you an opinion. You want the vet to see everything. Not a less painful version.

### **Answer 3:**

Depending on the level of swelling, you may need a vets opinion, however if you really just feel it is a sprain, you can use rest...keep the dog quiet for a week, no running. You may want to use buffered aspirin to help with the discomfort. Lots of vets will suggest X-rays because they are easy but they can be expensive and if it's just a sprain, they won't necessarily show anything.

Use the "buffered" kind since it is easier on the stomach. We have done this numerous time with our dogs with good results. Additionally, I have noticed that some neos seem to have residual effects from soft tissue injuries, meaning that they may continue to limp a little long after the injury should have healed completely. With a soft tissue injury, I think it is a good idea to move the affected joint through its range of motion (much like a physical therapist does with human injuries) several times a day if no pain is present. With more severe soft tissue injuries, I think this is important to resume full range of motion and not have residual effects from poor healing. I am by no means an expert, this is just what I have observed.

## ***Bald Patches of Skin***

I have some issues with my dog's coat right now. I have noticed that my poor boy now has these bald patches of dry skin where his hair has fallen out, they are on his head, back, arms. His coat is REALLY gross now too, when we got him he was on lams puppy and we switched him nice and slow to the adult version of lams and his coat has gone downhill fast.

What food is really good for these dogs? I bought a bag of the new line of Science Diet called Nature's Best but I just haven't heard anything about this brand. I would get Royal Canine but they don't carry it with enough regularity around here. Has anyone tried that Gold something or other brand? I don't care if it's \$60.00 a bag, I just want him to have his nice shiny coat back.

### ***Answer 1:***

Are these actual bald spots? Are there any on his face? It sounds like demodex to me and the "hot spots" may be a secondary staph infection. Can you post a picture or two of him?

### ***Answer 2:***

Yes there are spot's on his face. He has a large bald dry spot on his cheek that I just noticed yesterday. It's not red and angry, just bald spots that look super dry. I guess they're not true hotspots, just very alarming to see bald spots on his front legs and back and face and head. Last night after posting I did a ton of research on this board and other places on the net and am positive it is in fact Demodex.

My vet had mentioned it when we took him for his first ever vet checkup, he "thought" he might have seen it but couldn't tell because of the silver brindle in his coat, of course when he brought it up I had no idea what he was talking about.

So now I will have to have a chat with the vet about confirming it then taking a swift course of action to nip this in the bud. Hopefully it doesn't get out of hand on us.

### ***Answer 3:***

Try the ivermec treatment first.

### ***Answer 4:***

My other offering would be to make sure to talk to your vet about this and get a plan worked out including not only a treatment plan BUT asking if it might be better to wait on giving the poor chap his snip-snip. In working with vets and running across this type of situation a lot I would say it is my exp. that trying to do both at once creates some stress to the dog.

### ***Answer 5:***

Actually, you may want to NOT treat with ivermec right now. If this is juvenile demodex he may outgrow it without treatment. If you treat it, you will never know if that's all it was or if it would have been generalized demo. Any dog with generalized demo should definitely not be used for breeding. I think any demo at all should make one think long and hard about breeding that dog. It is a heartache to pass that on....the poor immune system that is the etiology of the problem.

### ***Answer 6:***

100% agree, you don't want to treat the young dogs right off, it could be a passing thing where hormones are fluctuating and they are going through periods of stress within their body from growing up. You could have a case that lasts a short time and never reappears. If you treat it then you won't know if it went away on its own ( good ) or would of became more severe and persistent ( bad ).

BUT

It could be a number of other things as well, I had one last year who I would of sworn she had demo, that turned out to be a food allergy, as long as she don't swipe a bite from someone else she is fine.

Also in the past I have seen dogs get dry patches in their coat when they were missing nutrients in their diet. Use a coat supplement with extra oils or even olive oil and that clears up.

Not saying your guy has or does not have demo, but just some thoughts, the advice given already here in this post has been excellent.

***Answer 7:***

First thing is to know what you are dealing with.  
I would have the vet do a scraping!

If demodex follow vets treatment plan.

Interceptor works well and helps with other parasites too!

***Answer 8:***

Well the vet did a scraping and it is demo, however he only saw 3 dead parasites so he felt confident that my dog is in fact fighting it off on his own. He also felt comfy doing the snip but gave me instructions to be on the lookout for anything out of the ordinary.

The vet gave us some antibiotics for him, Novolexin 500 mg, 2 pills twice a day. He also gave us a shampoo for him that I can start in a few days once his "area" is healed a little more. I have to do that once a week till the bottle is gone. I also got another round of Drontal to de-worm him as the vet said it is good to make sure that all parasites might be wiped out if there is any.

We're also in the midst of training him and am hand feeding him to get the whole sit/lay command down and the dominance thing worked out. He doesn't have any real issue's but our trainer wants us to let him know that the food comes from us and not some bowl that magically fills with food and that we are more dominant than him. Sorry to ramble but I guess I just want to know if you guys think we're on the right track with his treatment. Thanks for all your posts, they really help.

## *Need Advice for Ruptured Cruciate Ligament*

My poor dog has ruptured her cranial cruciate ligament left rear leg. She is now coming up for six years old and I am after some advice from anyone who has had to deal with the same problem.

Vet said in a dog this size this can be a tricky problem to fix and surgery is really the only answer. He also said given her age and that she is just starting to get more serious joint problems that success is not assured.

It does seem rather sad to have to consider putting her down because she is lame. She's a beautiful girl and such a brilliant dog. Can anyone tell me about success rates with this (cranial cruciate ligament rupture) issue and likely success outcomes? Anyone has surgery on an older dog?

### **Answer 1:**

I am going to be the downer on this post- again as usual with the cruciate surgeries. IMO- At her age especially, she won't benefit from the surgery. I would try the supplements that have been suggested elsewhere.

### **Answer 2:**

I have a foster who tore his left rear ACL also. Slipped on ice when he was nearly 7 1/2 at the time.

After going to 3 vets who deemed that surgery was not warranted due to his advancing age, his position as a "foster" and that he had been under anesthesia already numerous times for other problems, & the fact that his rehab would be extensive and his other leg would then most likely need to be done.

Anyway, I took him to my personal back doctor who also is a dog lover. This guy told me to just rest him and keep the joint as still as possible but do lots of massage on his leg muscles so they would not atrophy.

End of story: For four months I slept on a futon mattress in front of the firestone with him. He also was issued his own oxygen tank and mask to keep the oxygen going through him to help him heal. I gave him Rimadyl 2 times a day and rubbed, rubbed, rubbed. Five months later, he made his first outing to our county fair. He got tired and laid down for a while and waited for me to fetch and serve him a pail of fresh cold water, but since then everything has been nothing but good.

We have stairs which he does just fine with and my husband built a platform at the end of our bed for him to step up on when he snuggles in bed with us (bed hog!)

He now gets Synovi soft chews, Ester C, Vitamin E and Glucosomine and chondroitin daily.

I am so glad we decided on the long, non-invasive treatment. This dog loves life and his tail goes constantly. He recently got frostbit on one front pad and has a slight limp but even that has not slowed him down too much. Thank God for our fire stove as he lays on his futon mattress in front of it - he has his own body pillows that he paws around to get "just right" and after showing him (and watching him) to position his frostbit pad towards the warmth, his frostbite is well on the mend.

At his vet visit last month he weighed 178.5 pounds and the vet was amazed at how good he is doing considering all that was wrong with him and what he had been through. We will keep an eye on his weight to be on the safe side.

I hope this will encourage you about your old girl. Maybe we were just lucky, but this worked so well. Except for the fact that after his "slip" he will absolutely not walk on shiny, slippery surfaces at all, he does fine. We have horse trailer mats lined up lengthwise and sometimes sideways so

he can have full access to all of our home with the other dogs. And, when he goes to the vet, or the bank or our post office with us I have two lightweight nonskid 8 feet long rugs I roll up to carry and unroll for him to walk on. He patiently waits for me to roll one out, he will walk on it and stand and wait while I roll up the one he just walked on and I go around in front of him and unroll the 2nd one. (Not a red carpet!)

**Answer 3:**

I'm s-o-o sorry to hear about your poor "baby"! How bad is the tear? Is she able to get up by herself after lying or do you have to help her? If it hasn't gotten to this point – you should try to restrict her activity. No running or jumping to prevent it from tearing more.

My old English Mastiff had surgery on both her back legs when she was 5 yrs. It was a very hard recovery. There are conservative management of the injury. You can try acupuncture, chiropractor and there are other opinions along with supplements. With these treatments (along with no activity) the ligament doesn't repair but (they think) scar tissue will build up and substitute the ligament to provide support to the joint. You can also try knee braces. But be forewarned if your puppy favors the "bad" leg for too long of a time – it can tear the other ligament so be careful of all activities.

Because your baby is larger you will need to give supplements for her size. Sorry I forget how much to give – but here is a site that can help <http://pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/orthodogs/>

**Answer 4:**

Thanks so much for all your support and knowledgeable advice. She is doing much better. Still limping, but nowhere near as bad. Definitely an issue, but she can get around the yard with what appears to be minimal pain. She is always pleased to see me, will walk about ok and can get up and down ok. Eating and behaving like normal, more or less.

I took her to the vet who said (like you guys did) let's try the non-surgical approach first. So we started her off on a course of four Carprofen injections, one each week for four weeks. Not sure of the specific brand, but it was definitely Carprofen. These really helped her. He said the affects will peak in about four weeks so we should have an idea as to how successful it is then. He said the scarring and remaining ligaments may be enough for her to get around on.

I also upped her Rimadyl dose, which is helping and she gets Glucosamine and Chondroitin tablets along with Omega 3 fish oil. She has been getting these for years though, which may have helped a bit.

So, I'll keep you all posted and again thank you all for the kind words and good advice.

**Answer 5:**

One thing I would try is taking her off those supplements and putting her on Aniflex GL. It has all of the things you have mentioned plus some extras like Ester C and B complex. The Ester C is really needed at times of stress and pain. It will cushion and lubricate her joints some for you. You can order it at horse.com or any equine store. Probably cheaper than what you are doing now as well!

## Recovery from Surgery to repair Cruciate Ligament

After much research and numerous consultations we finally took our girl in for surgery on her ACL. We decided to forego the TPLO which, at first, was represented as the only sure means to cure the problem. Instead we opted for a procedure invented by a specialist in Chicago which basically combines two traditional techniques in one procedure.

Day Zero (Thursday): After surgery we wondered if we had made a grave mistake. After bringing my girl out, one of the vet techs broke into tears as she explained what we had to do. Not exactly a good sign! It turned out, they had spent the better part of an hour trying to coax her up on her feet.

They did not have much experience with a stubborn Neo, apparently. It took almost two hours to get her from the car into the house; so, we began to understand the tech's frustration. From there she cried and whimpered until two in the morning (we got home at 7:00). She took a break and then woke me up at 4:00 am crying again until 6:00. I gave her some meds at 6 and she finally fell asleep at 7:00 am. However, at this point, we thought, how could we go through with the second surgery after seeing her like this?

Day One: Friday. Luckily she slept most of the day. No crying. Then at 6:00 pm she woke up and decided she did not have major surgery and there was no need to be a drama queen. We assisted her with a sling every time she got up, but she seemed to be annoyed with this. The old hard head and stubborn personality, "I can do it on my own." Friday went much like this.

Day Two: Saturday. Grave mistake thoughts again. How are we going to keep her calm? She acted as though nothing was wrong and was fairly active considering. At this point, she was walking (assisted) as though nothing was wrong. She had her energy back and wanted to go out, in, then out, then in, etc., all day long.

Day Three: Sunday. I consulted with the vet because we were worried about how much help to give her. She wanted to get up on her own and although we were assisting her, she seemed completely capable of walking on her own. He said all was normal and just try and keep her calm, etc. Easier said than done.

Today, its Monday, 10:00 am, and the crying has started again. Not cries of pain, but rather boredom. She wants to go out and play. The pain meds don't put her to sleep anymore, and I don't know what to do. I had heard from numerous people who had had TPLOs that the first week or two was not bad because the dog did not want to do much. I wish this was the case. We heard a story from our vet that the specialist did a double ACL on a 9 mos. 90 lb. American Bulldog three weeks ago and the dog was doing extremely well. In his words, at suture removal (two weeks after procedure) if you did not know, you would never have guessed it had had surgery on both on legs. I am optimistic at this point. However, at day five, I have no idea how I am going to keep her "calm" for the next 6 weeks.

### **Answer 1:**

I hope that you are able to keep her on that leash for a full recovery!!!!!! Her outcome sounds good, you should be happy after those first few days. It is so hard with animals because they can't tell you how much it hurts etc... I wish you all the best!!!!

I am going through the same with deciding on what to do with my gal and don't want to make the wrong decision either. She can get up on her own etc. She never cries, gets burst of energy and still tries to play any time I am not watching over her like a hawk. I have consulted with two different vets so far and am leaning towards doing nothing at all besides some therapy ideas that I got from a holistic vet. I have a third appointment with yet another specialist on Wednesday of this week. I only give her regular supplements MSM, Glucosamine etc. plus a quarter a pill of

Rimadyl daily. The pain meds have her stomach all messed up, but this dose is doing some help with the inflammation and she still eats ok.

Can you tell me a little more of what process they did with your girl? I have been told about the surgical thread attachment and also where they switch around part of a bone along with the surgical thread. Neither of these have good benefit from all the research that I have done more than just allowing it to gain scar tissue on its own without messing around inside. The ligament is never going to grow back and no one is able to attach more than just the thread to give it added strength. The scar tissue is already forming so why go back to the start is my point. Do you have brace on her? I have also thought of buying one since I don't know about the operation just yet.

***Answer 2:***

We consulted a total of six vets and specialists before undergoing this procedure, so I understand what you are going through. We also saw ups and downs. She appeared to get better, then would over exert herself and she was laid up again.

Some people prefer to use supplements and this was helpful with our girl. She is on Cosequin and will be for the rest of her life most likely. We saw great improvements in her with this supplement and I would recommend it. However, the problem with her was not just a ruptured ACL, it was also skeletal. That is, the specialists believed she would continue to injure herself because the bones were not seated correctly. Thus in their opinion, supplements alone would not cure the cause of her problem.

I would be happy to explain my knowledge of the procedure; but I am not a vet and I don't know all the details. Essentially it did involve surgical string and movement of a bone. The trans-positioning of the leg bone is meant to add stability to the joint that the string does not accomplish on its own. We are only at day five, so I can't say she cured and everything is wonderful. Certainly I will keep everyone posted on her recovery and whether the procedure proves to be successful.

At this point, I can say, after consultation with so many vets, I was confident in the explanation of the problem and the procedure this particular specialist gave. He explained the studies to date and why he believes TPLOs should not be done. Everyone has an opinion on this subject and what I learned is one size does not fit all. Oh yeah, no brace.

### *Lump in Testicle?*

I have a male that has just turned one year old that has an ODD hard spot type lump on one of his testicles. It is about a half inch long and about the same wide but not uniform. I was told to check them out as they got older for this type of thing and it popped up all of a sudden within the last month. IT is NOT mushy like the rest within the mass. It does separate away from the testicle but more like directly on it.

Any ideas, should I be concerned for his health? I don't know IF I will ever mate him in the future to a female but IF I thought that I would should I have this checked out by my vet?

#### ***Answer 1:***

I would go to the vet to have it checked out. Any lumps on canines, cats, people, etc. should always be checked out.

## *How Old Too Old to Crop Ears?*

Up to what age can you crop a neos ears? My boy is going on 4 months and I am getting worried I may have issues with them if I wait much longer. I am going for a shorter crop I think they may call it northern type.

### **Answer 1**

Ear crops can be done at almost any age. I've known of dogs being cropped, or even having a poor crop corrected at a year of age or even older. The older the dog the messier the job, the harder the ear is for the vet to actually cut. And the puppy is actually easier to handle when it's younger (easier to pick up, to hold still while you clean ears and eventually take stitches out). So, in general, the sooner the better.

In terms of "type" of ear crop, that is pretty much a personal preference in conjunction with the ear set on the dog and how you feel it's going to eventually look. The end result depends a lot on the experience of the vet in getting the cut in exactly the right place to leave enough cartilage so that the remaining ear does stand up not out sideways or does lay flat over the top of the head. Sometimes I do wonder if the shorter ear-cuts sort of evolved to remove that problem...if the ear is pretty much OFF, well no problem with worrying about attractive ear carriage.

### **Answer 2:**

Just make sure the boy doesn't stay under too long. If the vet has experience with Mastini and ears then you should be ok but if not find someone else that does even if you have to drive a few hours. Ones without experience try to get it perfect and the dog may stay under too long, thus putting him in danger. Have the IV in place during the operation just in case anything does happen they can give some drugs to him.

### **Answer 3:**

After many discussions I have decided to leave the ears. Thanks for the help, though.

## *How do you Express Anal Glands?*

I know this is totally disgusting, but how do you express the anal glands? My dog apparently needs this, but I really don't want to blow \$150 at the Vet. My girlfriend and I have debated on where they are (the glands) and I don't think we have a clue.

Please help, because I think the stink is actually causing her (the dog) psychological problems at this point. I really don't want her to become fear-aggressive of her bum. I think the stink is really causing her emotional problems.

### **Answer 1:**

[http://www.earthclinic.com/Pets/anal\\_gland\\_issues.html](http://www.earthclinic.com/Pets/anal_gland_issues.html)

### **Answer 2:**

Try calling groomers and asking what they charge. A lot of them do it- and for probably cheaper than a vet.

### **Answer 3:**

It is fairly easy to do yourself. I am a groomer, I do anal glands all the time. UGH!!! Take her outside because if they smell as bad as you say they do they might squirt everywhere!! Lift her tail and place your index finger and thumb on either side of her anus. Gently apply pressure the sacs are on either side of the anus. They will feel like squishy balls, when we think you have found them, give them a squeeze, not too hard. If she acts in pain at any time stop immediately, it is also possible that the anal glands are impacted and it could be why your vet quoted such an outrageous price. The anal "juice" as I call it could be anywhere from liquid to look like toothpaste just brown. I hope I was helpful, anal glands are not fun and if left alone can cause all kinds of trouble.

### **Answer 4:**

Is it possible she has an anal gland infection? My Dane was really bugging at his rear end and it turned out that he actually had an infection. It was really stinky and the anal fluid was bloody as well. (I am a groomer also, so I know how to do them) Not a vet or anything, but just a thought.

### **Answer 5:**

IF she is rubbing her bottom on the ground a lot that is when you know you have to have them expressed and it is bothering her the most. My dog had a smelly butt once after he ate some of his foam bed and it did not come out the other end soon enough, INFECTION in his stomach was the cause. No operation thank god....needless to say no more beds.

I hope to god none of mine get that, I thought it was mostly linked with small football dogs, Hamm. I would do most anything for anyone of my babies but that is one thing that I think would make me throw up.

## *Cardiomyopathy! When do you know "it's time?"*

Our dog was diagnosed about a month ago with dilated cardiomyopathy. The disease is progressing and I know there will be no positive outcome.

Last month he weighed 105 lbs. We noticed a lot of swelling around his abdomen and are painfully aware that this means his heart is now failing. At the vet on Friday he weighed 118 lbs. She drained some fluid off to try to make him more comfortable. She says he is not in pain, just uncomfortable because of the extra weight. He began wheezing that evening and we decided it would be time for him to pass on Saturday.

Well, Saturday came and he was just a happy guy. He ate well, went to the bathroom, played, terrorized the cats, slept, and barked with no wheezing. We decided to wait. It is now Wednesday and he has continued to do "well". He can't run across the yard and it takes him a few minutes to find a comfortable position to sleep, but other than that he is pretty good.

My question is how long can he continue on like this? He is on Enalapril and a diuretic. The vet said not to bother filling the Digoxin script because it takes too long for it to take effect and Winnie doesn't have that much time.

Is there anything else we can do for him? I know that his prognosis is grim, I just want him to be as comfortable as possible.

### ***Answer 1:***

There is little you can do at this point that will make much difference other than love him and watch closely. He will let you know when the time is right. I know how hard this is for you but you have given him love and happiness that he has never known. When his time comes take comfort in this and that he will pass on being held in loving arms.

### ***Answer 2:***

Yes, I agree with what has been said above. He will let you know. One day you'll come home and look him in the eyes and you will know at that moment that it's time. He'll tell you that he's tired and simply done.

It will be sad. Very sad. But you will have the comfort of knowing that you did everything you could for this fellow and making the decision to put him down at that moment is part of doing the right thing.

## *Lyme's Disease. Any Ideas on Speeding up Recovery?*

My 1 yr. old Neo started limping on her front leg Monday, by Wednesday she was totally lame on the leg and it was swollen. I took her to work that day and her temp was 105. The Doctor took her temp with 2 different thermometers because he could not believe she was standing there wagging her tail and hopping around the office on 3 legs begging for treats with a fever that high. He pulled blood and got a strong, fast positive for Lyme. I'm now kicking myself for declining the vaccine last year. We started her on a with 6 week cycle of amoxicillin. Her temp is down to 103 and she is happy and eating all her meals but still dead lame on the leg. I know a lot of vets prescribe doxy instead of amoxicillin but my boss swears the amoxicillin works better. I'm just wondering if anyone has had this experience and maybe has some input as to how I can speed up her recovery.

### **Answer 1:**

From what I have read antibiotic therapy is best. You can boost her immune system with some Ester C, maybe it will help. Probiotics will help if she gets a tummy ache from the long term use of antibiotics. <http://www.2ndchance.info/lyme.htm>

### **Answer 2:**

Amoxicillin is commonly used because a lot of dogs will vomit on doxycycline at the dosage needed for Lyme. What is the dose of amoxicillin, do you know? Also, I have been fooled a few times with a Lyme + lame dog that turned out to be something else. Just because she is Lyme positive, does not mean that is the cause for the limp, although it is not WRONG to think so. I usually see a return to normal function within 3-4 days of antibiotic treatment. Also, the Lyme vaccine is NOT 100% and I see a lot of dogs who get it and still get Lyme, so do not think that this vaccine will prevent this.

She can also get Lyme AGAIN as this is NOT something you develop immunity against. She may also stay positive for a long time after treatment so a second Lyme test following treatment will not tell you if treatment is successful. Currently, the best test for ACTIVE Lyme and response to treatment is through Idexx labs and is called C6 which will actually give you a number and not just + or -. If she is still limping and leg still swollen, I would have her rechecked with more blood work and x-rays of the leg to make sure nothing is being missed.

### **Answer 3:**

Thanks for the input, today is the first day she has begun bearing weight on her leg. She was given injectable ampicillin the day she diagnosed and then started on 1000mg amoxicillin 2 x a day, I also started her on doxy on Saturday (500mg 2 x a day)...My boss said if it would make ME feel better and get me to stop asking him questions, I could put her on both if it didn't make her sick.. Well she is on day 4 of both pills and no vomiting or diarrhea. She is also going through a quart of yogurt a day! It is how I get her to take all those pills!

PS- X-rays showed only soft tissue swelling...elbow joint and long bones appeared normal also the CBC showed normal white count and chemical profile indicated normal kidney and liver values.

### **Answer 4:**

Remember, that with the doxy you are not supposed to let them have any dairy products. And you are supposed to limit sun exposure.

### *Rash on the back?*

While I was away from home my daughter called me and my boy has a rash on his back. I told her to put some bag balm on it. When I got home I looked at it, it was a lot of his back like he was biting or scratching at it. It's gross. He has advantage on him the one for fleas and ticks. Could it still be one of those? It's not mange, looks nothing like it. He is outside and we put in some straw to lay on and that's when it started, I guess. Please help he's getting a good bath tomorrow and more advantage put on him, maybe he is immune to that now, does that happen?

#### **Answer 1:**

Some dogs have allergic reactions to the application drops. I know of a few dogs in my kennels that have.

If you have fleas/ticks try to diatomaceous earth. You can get it at kvvet.com. The diatoms essentially slice open the fleas/ticks and they bleed out. It has the consistency of baby powder and should not be inhaled, but it will help get rid of the fleas. You can use it in the carpet, bedding, on the dog (it is a little drying, but does the job), and in the yard. It makes the environment for fleas and other bugs a hostile environment and after a while they don't come back.

#### **Answer 2**

I've used Advantage (for fleas) for a long time without problem but one year I got Advantix (for fleas and ticks) instead. And two of the dogs had terrible reactions to it. Started out as scabby spots, then lost hair, and eventually big red juicy rashes at the spot of application between the shoulder blades that got about 8 inches in diameter. It eventually went away. And not all the dogs reacted that way, just two of them. No more Advantix for them!

### *Demodex again – help with Mitaban Dip?*

My girl's demo has flared up. I knew it would, she just had surgery. For the first time it is mostly in her feet. She is back on a larger dose of Ivermec, and she is on cephalixin and daily washes of medicated shampoo on her feet.

Does anyone have any experience with the Mitaban dip? We never used it because it was on her face and was always open sores. We didn't want that on her face. Now it is just on the shoulder and the feet. ARGHH this is never going to end with this dog. She is 3 years old now! I know this is going to be a lifetime struggle with her, despite all that has been done, but I am hoping maybe the dip would work! I am also 8 months pregnant, and want to make sure having her dipped at the vets will not harm me or the baby, especially when the baby comes home! I will have to get that info from the vet.

#### **Answer 1:**

Mitaban dip is the way to go in my humble opinion as a DVM. I use it on all my demodex cases as I have seen very bad results with oral Ivomec and not one with the dips. Basically, the dip is done at your vet's office, it has to dry itself and cannot use a towel or blow dryer. The point is to have the medicine sit and be absorbed slowly and kill the parasites. Once it is dry, however, it should not be a problem. I think so long as you do not touch her when she is wet or dip her yourself, you should be fine, but I would have someone else pick her up from the vet's and maybe just avoid her for the rest of the night or limited contact. You can also wear plastic/latex gloves. At 8 months, your little one is pretty safe from mutagenic as much of the development is complete. If you are going to breastfeed, again, just avoid contact with the wet fur and wash your hands after each time!!

#### **Answer 2:**

Thank you! I have a meeting with the vet on Tuesday.

## *Need Help with Entropion*

I've just gotten my first Mastino. He is now 5 months old and we have just learned that he has entropion. My vet had referred us to an ophthalmologist for the surgery. When I called to find out more about the surgery, I was told that he had both entropion and ectropion. The cost would be \$95 for the exam and \$650 for the entropion and \$650 for the ectropion. I've read on one of the threads where a member was told that \$400 was excessive for this kind of surgery. Could our Neo have a more serious degree of this problem that would require it to be more expensive? I thought it was a simple procedure.

### **Answer 1:**

Before I would do those surgeries, how experienced is your vet with Neapolitans? Have you contacted the breeder to discuss this with them?

Many Neapolitans can have either or both of these conditions. I don't know how many people actually correct them. (Unless it is a chronic case) I would wait until your puppy gets older to do any corrective surgery.

### **Answer 2:**

Is your pup's eyelashes touching and turned toward the eyeball?

### **Answer 3:**

I didn't really see the eyelashes touching his eyes at all. The reason I took him in was because he had green secretions from both eyes since I got him. The vet gave me some ophthalmic ointment to give him while I get him to the eye clinic. I read somewhere else to not have this kind of surgery until he is at least one and more mature also. I'm not sure what to do, I'll guess I'll try contacting the breeder again to see if he can help me out.

### **Answer 3:**

I am a new owner also and have done extensive research on this. My boy has entropion and ectropion also, but I am waiting to get any surgery on this. DON'T EVER let any vet that isn't familiar with this breed TOUCH their eyes. They will ruin them. Take the time and do your research...you will save your baby's eyesight.

My boy has had eye issues ever since we got him, also. I have to put antibiotic ointment in his eyes every day to keep them from being gunky. I did follow the advice of one vet and got some surgery done, which almost blinded him. By my VERY devoted attention, he has had his eyesight saved and is almost well, two months after the surgery. It still is an issue and I still have to take care of him dedicatedly. My summer has been completely taken over and devoted to this.

PLEASE, contact the breeder, find a local competent vet and make sure that he KNOWS what he is doing with this breed's eyes. You can ruin him for life if you don't take time. I was lucky to skim past my baby's going blind and it is a daily ordeal to keep his eyes healthy because of a stupid vet's ego and issues.

It would even be worth it to DRIVE a few hours to make sure he is taken care of.

### **Answer 4:**

I actually have a good vet that does know what she is doing with my big guy and I am very happy with what she has done with his eyes. She has removed both cherry eyes without question or incident. She actually told me that we definitely shouldn't be doing surgery for his entropion until his "wrinkles" full grow in since they seem to loosen and tighten with every big growth spurt and since it is only 1 eye that seems to bug him. However and I admit it can be a huge pain; we do

have to take a warm wash rags (soft and white preferably) to his eyes twice daily to keep them free of any goo. Mornings are the worse. She also suggested using Refresh eye drops to keep them clean because they aren't harsh, don't have preservatives and are packaged for single use and Refresh PM to lubricate his eyes so that when his face is really heavy and his eyelashes are bugging him it will help keep them from causing damage to his eyes. Like I said still goo especially in the morning and after long naps but no infections.

But I would suggest starting the process soon so that your boy learns that it is part of his daily routine. My guy seems to enjoy the process and enjoys the warm rag on his eyes. He isn't a fan of the lubricant because he can see it coming but he likes his drops for some reason. Maybe this can be some help and relief for your big guy too.

***Answer 5;***

actually, entropion surgery is not "simple". Take too much and the eyelid won't close properly and lubricate the eye, take too little and you have done nothing to resolve the problem. You have to view the dog awake with as little swelling/infection/etc. as possible so you can see how the skin looks. Remember, this surgery is about removing excess skin and does not actually ever touch the eye itself. If you are, you are doing it wrong! So, you have to see the dog awake and healthy and judge how much of the excess skin to remove to return the eyelid to "normal". Once the animal is sedated or under anesthesia, the muscles relax and so the whole landscape is altered, which is why you have to know what you are doing before. I personally will shave the areas and use ink to make my incision lines when the dog is awake.

## *Anesthesia – comments?*

I took my guy to the doctor yesterday with eye issues (again!). The doctor, of course, could not examine him without giving him anesthesia. I again, discussed the anesthesia and it was something I was unfamiliar with. When I came back to pick him up, the doctor and I had A LONG Talk about anesthesia.

He told me (and this is the third vet that told me this) that the various things I have been frightened to death about anesthesia protocols are BullSh\*\* in no uncertain terms. He said that this type of dog has no more or less issues than other giant breeds. He was so positive that he actually wrote me a letter stating that and has his signature. He told me to keep that and sue him if anything happened to my guy that was anesthesia related.

Now that's ballsy. He also told me that the breeders needed to stop scaring people, that there animals out there not getting the correct treatment because people are too frightened to put their animals under.

Comments, anyone?

### ***Answer 1:***

I work in a vet clinic, and I think it is great that your vet is so sure of himself and his staff. What I don't think your vet is taking into consideration is that you can't predict everything that is going to happen. We run blood work at our hospital before we put any dog or cat under anesthesia. If something look's slightly off we post pone that surgery for the day then rather take a chance. I have complete confidence in my vet that if my Mastino had to go in for any surgery, I'm fine with it, go ahead and put him under anesthesia. Yes there are some dogs that do what we call wake up harder and that is where they come up from the anesthesia a little slower than some other pet's. Has your guy had problems with anesthesia before?

### ***Answer 2:***

No, None, at all. But the papers that I received when he was shipped to me had a page in it that STATED NO CERTAIN TYPES OF ANESTHESIA (unless I have it in front of me, I can't tell you the exact wording) and then had some caveats with it regarding anesthesia issues and cautions with these guys, so I have always been very cautious about who works on him and how they go about it. Also, with researching some of the threads here, you will find that there are many breeders who are on the same page regarding this.

That's why I am so surprised to find so many vets that are willing to stick their necks out and say "no problems with this breed." However, I have also been told by TWO vets that these dogs are such high risk under anesthesia that they won't touch them with surgery. I have a post on this site regarding this.

### ***Answer 3:***

I understand where I work uses one kind of anesthesia. I know of two different kinds, there is Iso and Sevo. At the hospital I work at we use Sevo and we have not had any problems with it. That is what was used when my guy was neutered, and he was put under again a couple of months later when another dog attacked him and did damage to his leg. Do you know what kind of anesthesia your vet uses? As far as the Iso I don't know much on it unfortunately.

### ***Answer 4:***

I am borrowing the following from another message board, please forgive some of the words being blocked as their site automatically blocks what it perceives as offensive language. The content is however, rather important, and I have heard first hand of too many Neos being lost

because of issues such as these. As a breeder I feel we need to make the new owners of this breed aware of possible problems so they in turn can make good sound decisions on medical care. And when it is MY Neo, I will always error on the side of caution. This was re-posted last summer

*.... Apparently there has never been a proven / documented case of allergic reaction to isoflurane anesthetic in humans or animals. However, an allergic reaction in any case does not necessarily manifest itself as simple cardiac arrest. It can manifest itself as anaphylactic shock which is another other set of symptoms and which can ultimately culminate in cardiac arrest.*

*Cardiac arrest under isoflurane anesthetic is usually caused by the induction agent, or sometimes by the combination of the two, but not by the isoflurane itself.*

*Cardiac arrest is almost always preceded by respiratory arrest which will not be detected by a cardiac monitor until it affects the heart. This can be about 90 seconds or more into the arrest and by that time the dog is in serious trouble. This is why it is so important that someone have their hands on the animal at all times, to actually feel and see what the dog's heart and respiration are doing. While you are using a veterinary clinic that has the most up-to-date equipment, an operating room that could compare to a hospital operating room, all that monitoring equipment is not the beginning and end of the care that is needed for monitoring of your Neo during surgery.*

*One of the few exceptions of this respiratory-arrest-followed-by-cardiac-arrest rule is if the induction agent used is xylazine / ketamine. These two used together as an induction agent and used with or without isoflurane, can cause sudden cardiac arrest.*

*According to our vet (and anesthesiologists), these two should never be used in combination on any brachycephalic breed (or any other breed for that matter). This is a however, a popular combination induction agent and often used in general vet practices today.*

*A further cause of problems under anesthetic is the pre-medication used. Many vets "pre-medicate" their surgeries with a sedative to make the animal easier to handle for induction and so that it will require less induction agent.*

*Many vets use acepromazine, but they tend to use it in too high a dosage. Acepromazine can prolong recovery times, which is very dangerous in brachycephalic breeds. These breeds need to wake up quickly. At least one of our vets refuses to use acepromazine under any circumstances or on any breed.*

*Brachycephalic breeds should also not be "masked down" with isoflurane. (A mask is placed over the animal's nose and the gas is breathed in until the animal is sleepy enough to be intubated. This is a very popular form of induction.)*

*Isoflurane is very irritating to the upper airway and there are enough documented cases of that irritation causing swelling, profuse excretions, etc., that it caused asphyxiation in short faced breeds, that the veterinary anesthesiologist society has issued a formal recommendation against it.*

*Intubation before introducing the isoflurane prevents this irritation, the tracheal tube protects the trachea and upper airway. Most vets will tell you that isoflurane is a good and very safe anesthetic, BUT it is only a part of the anesthetic protocol, not the complete protocol. The induction agent is just as important as the anesthetic and possibly probably more so.*

All of that said, the amount of experience and skill level of the vet is one of the most important aspects overall. We use vets that use both the most modern anesthetic agents/techniques available (our younger vets use them) and vets that use the older anesthetic agents (older and very experienced vets).

None of our vets had ever seen, touched or examined a Neo before ours. In fact, the vets at times have not believed what we have told them, but because of that disbelief, they did the needed research or made the appropriate phone calls to the veterinary colleges and experienced Neo vets to confirm our information.

We always pre-warn our vets about the need for decrease in anesthetic volume with the Neo (to the point where the vets must be tired of hearing it!) and thankfully have followed those instructions each and every time.

An educated Neo owner is part of the successful veterinary treatment of our beloved dogs.

**Answer 5:**

A bit more info on Xylazine/ketamine ...

VETERINARY COUNCIL OF NEW ZEALAND

*Two complaints considered by the CAC in the last 12 months involved the development of complications in patients treated with anesthesia where xylazine was one of the anesthetic agents. In one of these cases the complications could not be directly attributable to the xylazine use.*

*In considering one of the complaints, involving a cat anaesthetized by a combination of xylazine and ketamine, the committee sought a review of the anesthetic management in that particular case by Doctor. R. Machon (Senior lecturer and Anesthesia Service Head, University). The committee felt it appropriate to share some of what she reported:*

- There are a number of large practitioner based surveys which ... an increased mortality for xylazine in combination with ketamine in comparison to other commonly used anesthetic techniques in cats.*
- Recent reviews have recommended dose rates such as xylazine 0.5 – 1.0 mg/kg and ketamine 10 mg/kg, which are at the lower end of published dose rates for use in cats.*
- Studies using xylazine at 1.0 mg/kg in combination with ketamine 10 mg/kg, showed clinically significant cardiovascular depression in healthy adult cats. Reported effects included significant reductions in cardiac output, heart rate, stroke volume, cardiac index and arterial blood pressure, while systemic vascular resistance and central venous pressure were significantly increased.*
- Candidates for xylazine/ketamine anesthesia should be chosen carefully taking into account age and physiological needs. Most veterinary anesthesiologists would reserve the use of xylazine and ketamine for young fit and healthy cats*
- Xylazine significantly prolongs the duration of ketamine anesthesia in cats. Furthermore, the effects of xylazine in combination with ketamine are long lasting and extend beyond the duration of useful anesthesia. Reversal with an alpha2 antagonist allows patients to regain consciousness and become ambulatory much more quickly.*
- A notable number of reported deaths happen in the post-operative recovery period, possibly from respiratory depression or obstruction.*
- The specific effects of xylazine on cardiovascular function make good monitoring difficult. Intense vasoconstriction results in decreased peripheral perfusion and pale grayish mucous membranes. This effectively removes mucous membrane color as a reliable monitoring tool in*

*animals receiving xylazine.*

*Likewise, commonly used anesthetic monitoring equipment such as pulse oximeters and Doppler blood pressure monitors tend to function unreliably and inaccurately in patients receiving alpha2 agonists due to vasoconstriction, decreased peripheral perfusion and bradycardia. It is difficult to detect cyanosis or other signs of hypoxia under these conditions and therefore wise to offset the risk by providing additional oxygen to the patient.*

*Xylazine is also used as a sedative in dogs. The comments above in relation to xylazine's effects on the cardiovascular and respiratory systems apply to dogs as well.*

*The choice of which anesthetic agent to use for a patient is the prerogative of the veterinarian, taking into account many factors. Vets are advised to be familiar with the effects of the anesthetic they use. Risks should be minimized. As with all procedures, any significant risks should be discussed with owners, so that alternative options can be considered.*

*As Doctor Machon quotes in her letter to the Committee: "there are no safe anesthetic agents, there are no safe anesthetic techniques, there are only safe anesthetists*

**Answer 6:**

I, too, have a Mastino that has had multiple surgeries requiring anesthesia. One medication that I absolutely do not allow the vets to use is acepromazine. It was used for his first surgery and remained on board for a very long time. In addition, he became somewhat psychotic from it and the effects lasted an awfully long time. I have heard from English mastiff breeders that it is problematic in that breed, as well.

**Answer 7:**

Ok, I just asked my vet about this the other day. I want to add my disclaimer that I am not a vet, or any other medical expert. I only know what is in my dog's chart. When my girl had her first surgery I had a hard time picking her up that day. We had to carry her out (4 people carried her out). Here are the meds on the first surgery:  
Ace and Pentothal (she also had morphine for pain)

she went back for surgery a second time many months later. I voiced my concerns about the last surgery and how long it took her to come out of the anesthetic. Now, also remember she had no morphine and was under shorter length of time, here is her second surgery anesthetic.  
Ketamine and Valium, no ace.

The second time I went to get her she was up and alert. She got into the vehicle with little help, and was great all night. Again, she was under a shorter time. They have noted this in her file and will use the second method if they ever need to put her under again.

**Answer 8:**

Which is what is confusing. One poster in here says Ketamine. Another says No Ketamine...  
So, the fact of the matter is it's best to just have a darned responsible vet.

**Answer 9:**

With the past experiences and wonderful vets that I have here- I have had very good luck with ketamine. I have also had good luck with morphine and isoflurane gas.

Ace Promazine is a different story and IMHO should never be used on a mastino. They will hallucinate big time! Imagine a 180lb boy attacking a wall. Not fun.

The easiest way to explain sedation to a vet is to tell them to treat a mastino like a sight hound. Sighthounds don't have enough fat in their bodies to regulate. The Mastino is opposite- a lot of fat, but still requires the same amount of care. From what I have been told it equates out to about 40% of the "required" amount for the body weight.

What is very concerning is that with the number of mastini we all hear about having problems with anesthesia we don't really know if those mastini had underlying issues before being put under. How many had an EKG? How many had blood work done?

Money is not the issue. A lot of money does not equate out to good veterinary care.

**Answer 10:**

Just my two cents about the subject, have an IV given to your animal during any operation. At some vets this is an extra charge. PAY FOR IT. If your animal has problems with whatever is used to put them under, the IV is already in to give other meds if needed. If an IV is not in and they become shock-y or have a pressure drop etc.... the likelihood of them coming out of the operation alive is MUCH better because meds can be given direct along with fluids. During a pressure drop, veins cannot be opened up easily to start an IV.

My experience saved my own mastino life this year during a crop.

**:Answer 11"**

I am not going to jump into the debate of what types of anesthesia to use--in my experience, every animal, just like people, should be treated as an individual patient and not as a breed. It is my job, as a vet, to know what drugs are good for what animal and which ones are not. Although it may be true that some breeds have certain predispositions to certain drugs, I have also found that this is NEVER a 100% certainty. Example, Greyhounds are sensitive to anesthetics, as are many sight hounds but I have had a few that take double the dose to get them under! I have seen older dogs sedate on a dose that should even work on an animal 1/2 their size! I once tried to sedate an aggressive 65pound dog for euthanasia and after 400mg of acepromazine, the darn thing was still trying to attack us!

So, yes, I agree with the above statements, get a good vet that you trust and money is not the sum judgment of care provided.

P.S. Ketamine is used on dogs and cats. Typically, they wake up pretty harsh because ketamine is a general dissociative anesthetic for human and veterinary use. It can cause hallucinations when the animal is waking up. So we usually try to taper these effects with a pain drug or sedative.

## *My dog has cancer. How can I keep his remaining quality of life good?*

A second vet confirmed today that my 8 yr. old male has bone cancer and there is very little that can be done except keeping his quality of life good as long as possible. Does anyone have suggestions on the best ways to do that? Other than recommending I give a couple coated aspirin twice a day for pain neither vet had any suggestions.

### **Answer 1:**

So sorry to hear about the diagnosis.

If your dog has osteosarcoma (the most common of the "bone cancers" and the one with the worst prognosis) I don't think aspirin will be enough. From what I have learned osteosarcoma pain is akin to broken bone pain, i.e. VERY painful. Opioids might be able to help for a while (morphine, oxymorphone, hydromorphone etc.). Radiation has been shown to help with the pain too, but it doesn't stop the cancer. Amputation is the best and quickest way to relieve the pain and I know it's done in other giant breeds but I have yet to read about the procedure in a neo. Amputation can give a 6 month prognosis, amputation with chemo can extend life almost a year. And if your dog has one of the other "bone cancers" amputation with chemo can bring an even better prognosis.

Sorry again about your pup, cancer is always a heartache regardless of what you decide to do. What I know is that if osteosarcoma has been diagnosed pain therapy with aspirin already isn't enough to do the job. Hope this info helps, if only a little.

### **Answer 2:**

So sorry to hear what you're going through. I can empathize as my first Mastino, was diagnosed with bone cancer at the age of 9). His was in his front leg, and given that he was a big guy, dogs bear most of their weight in the front, and his age, I opted for no amputation, no chemo. Just pain pills and watching him for, as you say, quality of life.

It took two weeks from diagnosis until the morning when he looked at me and I knew that he was "done." It was time.

I will say, though, that the pain pills were pretty strong. And they did make a huge difference for him for that two weeks. I was really glad I had the last two weeks with him. The day I took him to the vet and got the diagnosis I just stared at the vet and I simply couldn't put him down that day. I know it was selfish of me, but I just couldn't face that decision that day! So the pain pills gave us both time to adjust, and he was actually pretty happy and normal for that brief but ho-so-important span of time.

The last day, as I say, he gave me what I think of as "the look." It was clear. He was simply tired. It was time to go, and I was prepared this time. I made the appointment that morning and took him in two hours later. It was still very sad. But I've never regretted it a moment.

You'll know when the time comes. Pay attention to his expression, his aspect.

And well, aspirin is a pain-reliever, but not very strong compared to this other stuff. If you go only with aspirin, I believe you'll have the same experience I did, maybe a slightly shorter period of time.

### **Answer 3:**

Coated aspirin? Well, just my humble opinion as a DVM but there are MUCH better options available than coated aspirin. There are MANY doggie safe NSAIDs out there which I would first

recommend and I think your regular veterinarian can give you a script for if they do not carry. Personally, I like a medication called Tramadol (which is, I believe used in human medicine) for cancer animals. If we cannot cure, we must take care to keep them as pain-free as possible. It depends on the type of cancer, of course, how well this will work, but you can also try prednisone which is safe to use with tramadol but not NSAIDs.

## *My Dog is Fat! How do I help him lose weight?*

What should my dog be on to lose weight? All she gets a day is a mixture of: 1 cup of dry dog food & ½ can of can food. Is this too much?? How much should she be getting? She is now 3 years old and the last time I had her to the vet – she weighed about 178 lbs.?

### **Answer 1:**

Sadly, just as for people, the trick to weight control in dogs is a calories in vs calories expended formula that the body calculates without mercy.

If a dog is overweight it needs to either take in fewer calories or expend more calories (just like us!) And as we all know, calories has less to do with QUANTITY of food item than it has to do with TYPE of food item and calories within.

If you were to feed your dog celery you could feed her many cups of food.

So look at the calories per cup of the kibble and the canned food figure out how many calories you're feeding her...and then if you want to feed a higher quantity, find a food with fewer calories. You can do things like feed less kibble and mix in chopped up carrots or chopped up something else with less calories, so she doesn't miss the volume.

### **Answer 2:**

YES, this helps! I just checked out the calories in Eukanuba – 253 per cup and pedigree – 285 a can.

So according to my figures Annie is getting somewhere between (with any special treats) about 1,000 a day. How much should I reduce the calorie intake to?

### **Answer 2:**

I wouldn't change their food if they are doing ok on it. I.e. stools, coat. What I would do is increase their activity. Maybe a walk every day? If you already do this, try picking up the pace a bit. Or a longer walk. Maybe add a second walk. Playing fetch in the yard for 20 min helps too.

### **Answer 3:**

Holy moly...she is gaining weight on 1 cup of dry and 1/2 cup of can??? This is all you feed her per DAY? My guy would turn into a bag of bones. He eats about 8 cups a day of Eagle Pack Holistic Chicken Large/giant breed and is still skinny! Granted he is only 2 years, but still. If she is gaining weight that rapidly, you may want to get her thyroid checked. How does her coat look? Just something to think about-not giving advice, but that seems like an awful lot of weight gain for not much food intake. My old Standard Poodles eat more than that and they are at perfect weight...

### **Answer 4:**

Why are you needing to reduce her in weight? The photo, of her standing, she doesn't look obese or anything and at 3 years old they start to widen and get thicker from what I am told. If you think she is too big or if she needs to lose more cause of other health reasons than yes the amount that you feed is not the reason.

Each dog is different, but I feed about 2000 a day to a 29 month old female that is only 130 and only ok in the active department. She seems to look about the same in the rib as your girl (not fat) but photos play tricks on the eyes some. Other photos may help out from the side. The idea about the filler will help her out, used that many times and they really don't notice, unless they just don't like what you are attempting to fill them up with. Remember, though, that her poo will be affected.

One thought I had is that bone weighs much more than other masses. If her bone is thick and/or she is taller than most she will weigh more. I would get her on a different food, I bet that even a regular food of better quality she will drop in weight. I saw that in many dogs that had when I woke up to better food years ago. I have all my guys on Canidae, all life stages. Coats are great, dogs love it even dry, lower waste amounts, and the price is good. I even switched my oldest dog (Golden Shar Pei Mix) almost 10 years old during an emergency to Canidae in one day and no runny poo. Hope any of this helps.

**Answer 5:**

I have found that some dogs just have a higher (or lower!) metabolism. Just like humans. I would definitely get the thyroid checked, and make it an afternoon/evening appointment to get the blood drawn.

I have a house dog that is 60lbs. He gets nearly 4 cups a day and still looks skinny, but he has an incredibly fast metabolism. And I don't feed him crappy food, he gets a 30% protein 20% fat dog food.

So there are a lot of variables when it comes to weight loss. More exercise is always good, less food, less treats or different treats, and getting the blood level checked, so you know if she is within the normal range or not.

Just remember, when picking out a dog food, more advertising does not mean better food.

**Answer 6:**

I would cut out the bad treats too. Use things like carrots. I cook liver and cut it up. Cheese is great! I love to use leftover tortellini as well. The more natural you can get the better for them.

**Answer 7:**

Dry and flaky skin is often a sign of poor nutrition. I see it at my kennels all the time. Sometimes dog's requirements are different than what the food can provide. Omega fatty acids and vitamin E are a good place to start for a healthier coat.

Nutrition is something most people don't study. They assume a "whole and complete" dog food is exactly that, but often times it is not whole and complete for YOUR dog. The AAFCO standards are poor at best. Switching your dog's food every six months to a similar food (ingredients are similar in quality) is recommended. Dogs absorb things differently from one food to the next.

Generally speaking: lamb or beef in fall/winter, and chicken or turkey in spring/summer.

If you can still feel your dog's ribs without pushing too hard, she should be fine. If she has no waist that may be of concern, but the rib trick is usually what I go by. I personally, would rather see my dogs a tad skinny than a tad fat.

## Anecdotal story of Ataxia after using Deramax

After my guy tore his ligament and the surgery went horribly- he developed arthritis in the injured joint. We tried Rimadyl- it worked for a bit, then just quit working. We tried tramadol- didn't help him at all. We tried Deramax. It helped a lot! He had almost no limp. This went on for about 2 weeks. One day I woke up to find that he couldn't use his whole rear end. It was completely ataxic. Paralyzed. I had to help a 190 lb. neo up the 3 stairs to our front door. Carry his whole rear end. Not an easy task let me tell you!

I ran him to the vet. The asked if I had put him on anything new. At that point the only thing he was on was the Deramax and Vitamin C. My vet was amazed. She had never seen anything like it.

The morning I found him like this, I stopped giving him the Deramax. I did some research online and found ATAXIA listed as a side effect! I called the vet immediately, who then called the manufacturer- they are supposed to report this stuff. Upon her calling she was told that in no way was the Deramax responsible! Yet it was listed as a side effect on the company's own website! She reminded them of the warning on their own website and was told that ONE dog became ataxic in their research trials- out of over 1,000. So NO WAY was it their drug. They would not report it.

Well- 4 days without the deramax and he was walking normally again. U tell me.

### ***Answer 1:***

I had a dog on it for a month and she was fine. She is always on pain killers due to her hips, but this is a big fat bulldog not a neo. I also know of a rescue who was on it and was fine.

## ***Fleas***

I have a 3 1/2 year old male and I'm wondering if there is a natural flea remedy. The last few times I have applied Frontline, he has broken out from it. I also have a Cat so I can't use Advantix. We are Florida residents so the fleas are really bad, he is an indoor dog -I feel dirty even using the "D" word, because he thinks he's people...

Any suggestions are greatly appreciated...."Help me Obi Wan Kenobi's...your my only hope!"

### ***Answer 1:***

I have the local pest control company spray the entire yard for those pesky little creatures

### ***Answer 2:***

Sometimes garlic can be beneficial to keeping fleas at bay.

I feed my guys Brewer's yeast w/ garlic and none of my dogs have ever had fleas.

### ***Answer 3:***

If you're dealing with fleas not fleas and ticks you might try Advantage. Advantix is the Advantage plus tick stuff and I've heard of other dogs that have had bad skin reactions to it. But I've not had or heard of any problems with Advantage on either dogs or cats or mastini.

I've always heard that Brewer's Yeast added to the food helps w/fleas, although I've never tried it myself but testimony from people like John who HAVE used it bolsters that it DOES work. Don't know how it would be on ticks, though.

### ***Answer 4:***

Unless your cat licks your Neo or cuddles with your Neo after you apply Advantix, there is no reason you cannot use it. I have 2 dogs and 5 cats and I use Advantix on the dogs, Revolution on the cats, and have never had a problem. Of course, my cats do not lay with my dogs so there is no contact with the Advantix. If your cat gets some on, wash it off right away. It is toxic after absorbed.

### ***Answer 5:***

There are two ways to implement to fight against fleas and ticks/mosquitos feed them raw garlic, or Bug off Garlic chewable for dogs.

FYI, we feed ours garlic with their raw chicken

Tea Tree Oil

Citronella essential oils

two drops before they go out

## ***Sudden Aggression Problems?***

I'm having real issues with my 2 year old male neo. He went to obedience training and has been a wonderful boy. My problem is that we went on vacation this summer for two weeks and left him with our obedience trainer, who knows him VERY well. We picked him up and she said he could come stay with her any time he was wonderful. Even made good friends with her hound.

After we brought him home, he developed separation issues. We would leave the house and he would howl and bark and sound in horrible distress. Even just leaving the area he was in to go upstairs would set him off. He couldn't be left alone at night, as he would scream all night long since we were upstairs and he was downstairs. Once we would put him in his crate he would be fine and sleep all night. We now crate him (haven't done that in a very long time) every night and while we are at work to keep him comfortable.

He has also taken to not liking anyone, at all, coming in the house anymore. He never had a problem with it before. Don't misunderstand, he was always on guard with strangers, but always trusted our judgment. Now he will allow someone in the house, and let them pet him. But after a few minutes, he will start barking violently at them. This has NEVER been an issue before.

This all started after bringing him home after vacation. I can't understand what is going on. We have enrolled him once again in obedience training to try to re-socialize him (not that he wasn't social before). My trainer is stumped as to this drastic change in him. He is wonderful with us, he is just aggressive with people not living in the house, and even with people he has known his whole life! We have asked neo owners for advice and read books since he was a young pup so that we would raise a good social boy. I feel like we've done something horribly wrong, but I don't know what it is. We have followed everything we have been told to do.

Does anyone have any advice to give? I will not let my teenage daughter have friends over anymore until we get this situation under control.

### ***Answer 1:***

Who knows what goes on in the mind of a dog! What a predicament!

Sounds like you're taking the right steps. If he's happy and quiet in the crate, crate him. Don't worry about it being "confining" he obviously feels safer that way. Good for you for figuring that out and for taking that step.

The barking at people after he's accepted them is more worrisome, of course. Seems like he knows that when people come in he should say hello and let himself be petted, but when that's all over, after a couple of minutes he doesn't know what to do and he's nervous and unhappy. Sounds like a lack of confidence (although not having seen the dog, I'm guessing, and I AM anthropomorphizing a bit because who for heaven's sake knows WHAT a dog is thinking!)

Let him greet people, let him be petted and wag his tail, and then until you've solved the problem, remove him from the people BEFORE he begins to bark and such is good. You might watch for signs that he's getting anxious, a lowering of the head, eye contact, and

stuff like that...and try to react BEFORE you see those coming on. Don't let him get started. The more he does it, the more he will do it, so the trick is to prevent altogether.

Worst case you might search for someone who knows and uses the Koehler method of training. It's often used specifically for dogs that are showing aggression. I took my bitch, to these classes for a long time. It made a HUGE difference in her.

In my dog's case, she wasn't barking at people, but if she saw another dog that she didn't know she would bark uncontrollably and very aggressively. I couldn't take her to a normal obedience class because she was totally out of control no amount of yelling or scolding or yanking on a choke made a difference because she was basically in a frenzy of barking.

It literally took ONE lesson, (for me to learn how to correctly react to this barking) and ONE application of that lesson with her. And boom, that initial problem was SOLVED. Once that problem was solved, then she could listen to me and we could get through the obedience lessons.

She doesn't bark at dogs anymore, she isn't aggressive to other dogs anymore. Oh, I don't let her run loose with other dogs, but I can take her to a show and know that she'll be ok walking around the grounds. I can walk her through a crowd now, and she's good.

She was only a year old at the time of that problem and that lesson, so the problem hadn't been really strongly embedded in her psyche....and you've got a male, and a two-year-old, so things may be very different in this case...I just offer it as an example that you CAN change behavior in a dog.

Taking him to obedience again is good. He needs things to be thinking about and to know what to do. You might try (and this will sound silly) agility. Even if a dog like a mastino can't necessarily go fast and hard around the agility course, they often enjoy learning and seem to enjoy having done certain things. Even one or two exercises once or twice a week can help a dog learn confidence.

And the sit-stay down-stay exercises should help a good bit anyway, especially if you can get to where you leave the room and he has to stay still. He should learn that you'll be coming back. He may always be a dog that you don't leave loose in the room for long periods of time when non-family member are there, but you shouldn't have a dog that people are afraid of or that barks like that at people.

**Answer 2:**

Thank you for your help. I will look into Koehler training. I've looked it up on the internet and found a trainer about an hour away from me. I'm going to call and talk to her on Monday.

**Answer 3:**

William Koehler trained dogs for the army in the 1940's, worked with kennel clubs in California to offer obedience classes in the 1950's, and is perhaps best known for training dogs (and other animals) for the movies in those years. He trained dogs for Walt Disney Studios, and is the inventor of revolutionary training methods admired by many for decades.

He wrote a book *The Koehler Method of Dog Training* (Howell Book House, New York, NY; 1978) 205 pages, hard-cover. The book is out of print, but probably available via the usual sources for such.

I found his writing style in the book to be a little obnoxious! He is arrogant, and sometimes downright snotty. But if you understand his basic principles...which is that all dogs can be trained and SHOULD be trained for their own safety and protection. Furthermore, NOT all dogs are willing to be trained, some are much harder to train than others. Even the hard-to-train dogs need, deserve, MUST be trained. For their safety, happiness, and welfare, and for that of the humans as well.

He is not soft on people's failures in training their dogs; this is perhaps where he gets most obnoxious, in letting you know just how he feels if you are not absolutely consistent in doing your job. This I found a little hard to take, simply because most people just are doing their best. But I liked his basic principles.

And when you have a dangerous situation (such as I did with a dog out of control barking at other dogs. The danger is what would the other dog do when challenged, what if my dog broke its leash, potentially real danger to me, to the dog, to the other dog, to other owners) Koehler believes you are doing the dog a much bigger service if you teach him/her quickly and effectively.

If you have a dog that is threatening people...you need to teach the dog very quickly to NOT do that...then you can work on other behavior, that's his theory. By today's standards, much of what he recommends in some situations is considered cruel. He does a good job of explaining what, why, and how to do things, and why they are NOT cruel, really.

Koehler training is not for every dog, every situation or for everyone. I found it effective in the problem situation I had, and I would recommend it for anyone with a mastino in a similar situation. I would NOT recommend buying a book and trying it on your own. I STRONGLY recommend finding someone with a background in training hard-to-train breeds and dogs...and getting their help.

## ***Loose Stools?***

My dog has had very loose stool for about a month now. At times worse than other, I had him to the vet twice already with him having a CBC, stool and urine analysis etc. Nothing comes up as unusual, he is on a rather bland diet, mostly chicken, turkey, chop meat, and some of his regular dry food. He does drink a lot but it is really starting to concern me. He has always been a picky eater and now it's even harder to get him to eat. Any thoughts would be appreciated. Thanks in advance.

### ***Answer 1:***

Try a few tablespoons of yogurt with every meal.

### ***Answer 2:***

add 1 cup of rice to the dry food.....most definitely will stiffen it up....  
maybe some baby cereal.....the dry kind.....added to his food.....  
Re-consider chicken unless it is really low-fat.....  
And mine never did well with turkey at all.....

### ***Answer 3:***

Pumpkin works well but the real problem is getting to the bottom of this, so to speak. Coccidian can cause diarrhea and can be hard to diagnose. Perhaps your vet could start him on a trial of metronizadole (not sure how to spell that!)?

### ***Answer 4:***

Thanks for all your suggestions, he goes back to the vet on Thursday and hopefully we will come up with an answer. I have tried the yogurt, rice and practically everything else with no luck. I will let you know what the vet says.

### ***Answer 5:***

Came back from the vet a little while ago, surprisingly Blue actually gained back the weight he had lost, he is now 132.6 lbs. The vet said it's not parasites, infection etc. and it is just that he is "grazing" outside and his tummy can't handle the fiber. So we just keep a better eye on our boy, give him the meds the vet gave him to make him feel better and keep our fingers crossed. Thanks for all your help.

## ***Panosteitis?***

I was wondering if you guys ever had a problem with your pups growing too fast and causing severe pain, and if so what did you do? Any info would be great we don't feed a lot and the vet said it is just a thing some pups get and will outgrow it.

The vet called it Panosteitis

### **Answer 1:**

Hi, my first neo had that problem and it was from using a food with too much protein in it. Anything 25% and below is better. I use eagle pack large breed puppy food (23% protein) and so far so good.

### **Answer 2:**

Listen to your vet. Panosteitis is often called "growing pains" and it can be quite severe or fairly mild. Major symptom is sporadic pain. Often seems to "move" from limb to limb. Treat the symptoms. If the dog is in pain, let him/her rest. Sometimes I've been told aspirin to help relieve pain, but I've also been told that it's best to let the dog rest rather than relieve the pain and then because the dog is feeling better, it runs and romps and ends up hurting itself more. I suppose if the pain is so severe that the dog is really screaming and crying and not moving, some aspirin or other vet-prescribed pain relief would be preferred, but if it's just some mild limping or moderate, let it be.

My first male had it for a while. Got over it. I didn't change his food or anything, but we were feeding a lower protein diet anyway. He was a pretty picky eater too.

Typically can occur between 6 - 18 months. Some dogs never get it, some get it a lot. This breed, like lots of the giant breeds, is laying down a LOT of bone and is growing very fast especially that first year, relative to other "normal" dogs. By the way, people can get it too, especially young teens who begin a growth spurt.

Again, listen to your vet. Try doing a web-search on "growing pains" (easier to spell)

### **Answer 3:**

Try giving him 1000mg of Vitamin C. Takes care of Panosteitis after a very short time.

### **Answer 4:**

Panosteitis is a spontaneously occurring lameness that usually occurs in large breed dogs. German Shepherds seems to be particularly predisposed to this condition. Due to this, it is possible that the disease may have genetic causes. Some veterinarians feel that this disease may be induced or worsened by stress.

Affected dogs are usually in the 5 to 14 month age range and male dogs are more commonly infected than female dogs. The disease has been reported in dogs as young as 2 months and can occur in young mature dogs. The lameness tends to occur very suddenly, usually without a history of trauma or excessive exercise. In most cases one or the other front leg is affected first and then the problem tends to move around, making

it appear that the lameness is shifting from leg to leg. There are often periods of improvement and worsening of the symptoms in a cyclic manner. This makes evaluation of treatment difficult since many dogs will spontaneously recover with or without treatment and then relapse.

X-rays usually reveal that the bones have greater density than is normally found. If pressure is applied over the long bones, pain is usually present. The X-ray signs do not always match the clinical signs.

In most cases, the worst pain lasts between one and two months but may persist in a cyclic nature for up to a year. Analgesic medications like aspirin can be helpful. In severe cases, corticosteroids may provide relief.

Currently, a common rumor is that low protein, low calcium diets may prevent this condition. It should be noted that the energy level of low protein/calcium diets is often lower as well. If this is the case, a puppy will eat much more of the diet in order to meet its energy needs, resulting in higher total calcium consumption. It may be preferable to feed a puppy diet and restrict total quantity to keep the dog lean than to use a low protein/low calcium adult dog food.

This condition is self-limiting, meaning that it will eventually go away, with or without treatment. Pain control can go a long way towards helping your pet feel more comfortable and should be used, though.

I recommend x-rays to diagnose 100% so nothing more serious is over looked.

**Answer 5:**

Thank you very much for your time and input, we did have x-rays done and you are right on with your post as to what was seen and what the vet said to us. It's been about 2 weeks or so since we had them done and she has good days and bad but as of late more good than bad.

## ***My dog had a cerebral aneurysm?***

My husband and I recent purchased a Neo puppy from a breeder in Texas. We had our puppy for 2 months (he was 15 weeks old) and he suddenly died last week. We had a necropsy report that was normal. The vet said she was unable to open the puppy's head to confirm it but she suspected a cerebral aneurysm. I am writing to you to get your take on this. We have contacted the breeder but he hasn't taken any responsibility. Have you ever heard of anything like this with Neos?

### **Answer 1:**

Oh my, what a sad story! I am so sorry to hear of your loss of your puppy. I'm not sure why your vet was unable to open the puppy's head, except that it probably isn't something they do in most necropsy situations and maybe it takes extra special saws or something.

By the way, good for you for having the necropsy done. Vets can be pretty astute as to the suspected cause, and I would bet your vet probably is making a pretty good guess.

But, to answer your question, no, I've not heard that cerebral aneurysm is anything common in the Neapolitan mastiff or indeed in any dog, although I am sure it can occur in any breed just like in people, it's not common, really, but it can happen. I don't suppose there was anything like the puppy falling and cracking its head against any hard surface was there? Probably not, but one always wonders.

I have heard of a couple of dogs that I am sure had strokes, one was a mastino, others were other breeds. The symptoms were pretty much just like what you would expect in people who had strokes, although, of course, the dogs can't tell us what they're seeing or feeling. A couple of those mostly recovered after some time, a couple didn't. I have never heard of aneurisms being anything hereditary or predictable, or preventable, whether in people or animals. It was good of you to notify your breeder. I am sure he or she was just as surprised and upset as you, or nearly so. Since it isn't hereditary or predictable, there really is nothing the breeder or anyone or you could do or should have done.

It's just really bad luck for you.

Again, I am so sorry to hear your sad story.

## *New Owner wants to be Educated in the Mastino!*

We are looking forward to be educated on all aspects of the Neapolitan mastiff breed our pup is 14 weeks old

### **Answer 1:**

Congratulations on your new puppy! What fun you will have!

You're looking forward to being educated on all aspects? Good for you. I fear, however, that it is impossible for anyone to give you knowledge of everything you need to know all in one sitting. It's sort of like a new parent asking someone to tell them everything they need to know about raising a child....there ARE certainly some simple things to know and do, but there are so many different situations, and every child is a bit different. Well, I'm sure you get the idea!

I'll try to give you some highlights you may be interested in but you will surely have more questions as time goes on. Please do feel free to continue to ask about any situation or problem you may have at any point.

You haven't said what your background is in dogs...have you had dogs before? If so, what kind? Giant-breed ones? Do you have children? Yes, I start out with questions for you because depending on the answers there are many things that may or may not apply to your situation.

But, to start with, you may find your little puppy to be oh so sweet and gentle and funny and sweet. The young Neapolitan mastiff is generally a clumsy, sweet loving little creature. Be gentle and nice to your puppy. Establish some ground rules that are always enforced, nicely not harshly.

Such as where will the dog eat and be fed? Establish a spot, and a schedule and a routine and stick to it. Don't let anyone bother the dog while it's eating.

Where will the dog sleep? Lots of people use a crate simply because then there's no problem with the dog wandering around the house at night, housetraining is lots easier. And it's really good if the dog is used to a crate so that if you need to crate the dog at other times the dog is comfortable and happy in there. (Such as if workmen are coming and going into the house and the door will be left open, or if you have guests and someone isn't comfortable around the dog, or if you're eating a meal and you don't want the dog begging)

Lots of people end up with the dog on their bed. No problem, really, as long as the dog knows YOU are in charge on the bed, not the dog. When the dog gets older it may resist being told to get down by you, or to move over by you and you don't want that. So if you let the dog in the bed with you make sure the dog knows it gets up when YOU want and gets off when YOU want. Again, establish rules that are enforced, not harshly, but matter-of-factly. Sort of an attitude of "this is what we do" with no excuses or apologies or sternness really.

Where will you be exercising the dog? In a yard? On walks? In open fields? Establish a routine for play and potty. A fenced area is the best, for control of the dog and of

passers-by, but you certainly can raise any dog in a city with plenty of walks and being careful about picking up after the dog and so on.

Play with your young puppy, by all means. But some cautions: the mastino puppy is often clumsy when young and can get quite wild and since it grows so quickly, it can do damage to itself or to others as it displays a natural exuberance as it gets bigger. Don't play roughly, be watchful of its tolerance. The puppy doesn't have to be wrapped in cotton-wool, but leaping and jumping can be tough on joints of a giant-breed dog growing rapidly. A wrenched knee or elbow can be painful and the puppy may want to continue playing causing more damage. It's up to you, the adult, to keep an eye on the animal and minimize such problems.

There's lots and lots more. In general, most advice about puppies in general applies to the giant-breed dog, and the Neapolitan mastiff, with the caveat that as it grows, the giant-breed Neapolitan mastiff will get very big, and personality-wise, it's not a golden retriever.

Oh gosh, the more I write the more there is to write:

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Here's some info from one of our old club fliers:

### **The Neapolitan Mastiff**

The Neapolitan Mastiff is a member of the Working Group. This Italian mastiff is a direct descendent of the dogs which accompanied the Roman Army across all of Europe. Over the past 4000 years it was refined to its present form as a guardian of the family and estates in northern Italy. (Note that many use the abbreviation Neo, yet the breed is the Neapolitan, not Neopolitan. True Neapolitan Mastiff lovers the world over prefer the term Mastino". Plural is "Mastini".

Mastini are large, powerful dogs, with a significantly wrinkled head, and a serious demeanor. The most important image evoked by the Neapolitan Mastiff is massiveness -- massive head, massive bone, and massive body. A typical male is 26-29 inches at the shoulder and weighs 140-170 pounds. Females a bit smaller. Not as tall as the English Mastiff, they often appear more massive. The ears are often cropped and the tail docked by 1/3. While not required, many simply prefer the traditional look.

### **Temperament**

Mastini have a fierce appearance, yet they are generally peaceful, steady dogs with even temperaments. They are wonderful with their families but can be wary of strangers. Like many mastiffs, they can be stubborn or shy. It is important to socialize the Neapolitan when it is young to get it accustomed to people and places. It is also critical to never forget the instinctive protective nature of the dog. Raising a Mastino requires an awareness of how giant guard dogs think and behave, and a consistent and sensible discipline.

### **With the family**

Most Mastini are excellent with the children they know and would never hurt them purposely. Still, it is vital to remember that these are huge dogs and they often forget how big they are. This can result in a Neapolitan unintentionally knocking a child down. They will often instinctively chase people running or bicycling past and playfully knock them down. Their size and natural exuberance means they should never be unsupervised around small children even in play. Most Neapolitans are tolerant and

good-natured. If they are raised with other animals they are often best friends. However -- two adult dogs of the same sex cannot always be expected to get along. Most will chase cats or anything (or anyone) that runs away from them.

While most adult Mastini are calm animals who sleep a lot, puppies are active, curious, cute and cuddly as the most winsome toy puppy. And many people find that the adolescent Neapolitan, when awake, is an energetic, powerful animal. It is important to train the Mastino when it is young, so that when dealing with the strong, stubborn teenage personality stage, the appropriate ruling structure is already in place. By the age of three or four, most Mastini demonstrate mature and desirable laid-back adult-type behavior.

We have to admit it though:

They ARE messy dogs!

A pristine house with many precious or breakable items is not the ideal environment for a young Mastino and anyone in such a house should think twice before getting this breed.

All young dogs need to be taught what is permissible and what is forbidden. In most ways, a Neapolitan is like other dogs -- except that one can never forget that it is a large dog and problems or challenges will be correspondingly bigger. By age 6 months, a young clumsy Neapolitan can be 100 pounds or more! The crate for such a dog is bigger than many dining room tables! And knocking furniture over can be common. Finally, most Neapolitans snore, some quite loudly.

And did you see the movie "Turner and Hooch?" Or another movie "Beethoven?" Well, they did exaggerate the drool in those movies...but not much! Yes, Mastini drool. Not all of the time, though. Usually only when they are hot, nervous, or after eating. They are especially prone to copious drooling after drinking water. Mastino owners learn to carry towels and are deft in mopping doggy chins. Neapolitans are not always the tidiest of eaters. Those big loose lips seem to scatter kibble all over. They have big feet too, so a dog outside in the mud can bring a large amount in. Pound for pound they are no messier than other dogs--but they are big dogs, and any mess they make is bigger!

### **Health**

Neapolitans are generally hardy dogs. One minor problem that often occurs is "cherry eye". Tissue in the corner of the eye becomes red and inflamed. This looks terrible, but is cured with a minor surgical procedure. In the vast majority of cases, there is no permanent damage. Despite impressive wrinkles and loose skin, most do not have skin problems.

There are health problems that are common in giant dogs and the Mastino is not immune. Bloat is a mysterious problem of all deep-chested breeds. As with all breeds, the Mastino can develop hip dysplasia. This is something you need discuss with your breeder and your veterinarian.

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I do recommend reading books, about dogs in general, about giant-breed dogs, and about the Neapolitan mastiff. I'm a big fan of reading.

There are also many resources on the Internet. Both dedicated to the mastino and about dogs in general.

Lastly, you should regard the breeder from whom you got the dog to be a true resource for you as your puppy grows. Talk to the breeder, ask questions, describe how your puppy is behaving and ask about how the parents acted at the same age and so on and so forth.

The world of the mastino is a fascinating little world!

## ***DQ's in selecting a Stud?***

When selecting a male for stud for your female are there any disqualifying characteristics?

### **Answer 1:**

In terms of DQ's for selecting a male...well, I wouldn't say there are any DQ's specifically for a male, although there are DQ's for showing dogs (male or female) in the breed. See the breed standard for those.

But to your specific question, in general, as in any breed, you should select a male that will give you characteristics you want in the puppies. Obviously some of these are characteristics specific to the Neapolitan mastiff (like the thick wrinkled skin, massive bone, correct head proportions and so forth) and some are characteristics required / wanted / needed in any good dog (like good construction, good topline, good front, etc.)

You also have to assess your female to determine what characteristics she has that you want to improve upon, and make sure the male you select doesn't duplicate those.

When selecting a stud dog, it is best if you know and can see the dog himself, but also better if you know and can see some of the siblings, and/or the parents too. You see, when you're breeding dogs, the objective is supposed to be to be able to predict (as much as possible of course) what the puppies will look like. If the adult dog is an anomaly, the only really good one out of the litter, you might have a somewhat less confidence in the dog's ability to reproduce his own characteristics than you might if the whole litter was good and the parents were also good and their littermates were also good.

Best of all is if you can see puppies produced by this male from previous litters. If the dog has consistently thrown pups of a certain type, then you can more confidently expect the dog to do the same for you. In fact, if you see a male you really like, and he's not been used a lot for breeding, you might actually ask if the sire of that dog is available for stud. After all, you know that the sire of that dog has produced that dog you really like....you should then have more confidence in the sire to give you what you want!

Other things you might want to inquire about when you use an outside dog for the first time, aside from seeing other offspring, littermates and adult relatives (parents, aunts, uncles, etc.) is things like "white". In our breed there is a certain amount of white that appears, typically a spot on the chest or neck or chin or toes. It's ok as long as it's not too much. For example, white on the toes is ok, if it goes up onto the whole foot, not so much. A spot on the chest or neck is ok, but a whole wide patch over the whole neck is a no-no. Sometimes pups are born with a little white on the top of the muzzle, above the nose. Usually that will disappear within a couple of weeks. BUT, a dog that maybe used to have white on the muzzle like that, bred to another dog that had the same, can produce puppies that have MORE white on the muzzle....and sometimes it won't disappear if it's too much and that is a bad thing. There's really no way to tell about white that has disappeared, but in general, a dog with a lot of white (like all four feet and more than just a little on a toe or two) shouldn't be bred to another dog with a lot of white. No problem breeding such a dog, just be careful to whom you breed it, that's all.

This is just an example, there's a lot to think about. It's always a gamble too, but that's part of the adventure of breeding at all, isn't it?

