

## ***Anal Glands***

Few topics raise dog owners' eyebrows (and lower dogs' tails) faster than the subject of anal glands! These two small repositories of foul smelling material produce an oily semi-liquid substance that is stored within the gland.

Anal glands are located one on each side of the anus at the four and eight o'clock position. The gland empties through a short and narrow duct to the surface near the inside edge of the anus. The secreted substance is a semi-oily, brownish fluid that packs an odour strong enough to gag a maggot!

For unknown reasons, some dogs' anal sacs produce a thick, semi-solid material which is much more prone to impacting the gland. In certain cases the gland becomes infected, causes pain and inflammation and even breaks through to the skin surface, causing what we call an "anal gland abscess".

Signs that your dog may be having an anal gland problem include:

- "scooting" or dragging their rear across the floor.
- your dog keeps licking or chewing near their rectum.
- you notice a foul or "fishy" odour coming from your dog's rear.

If you notice one or more of these signs, it may be a good idea to bring your dog in for a check-up. The glands may actually need to be manually expressed, and we can discuss the best way to manage this irritating problem.

So if your dog's derriere demands some attention, give us a call.