

PROTECT YOUR BREEDING PROGRAM

Use Licensed Veterinarians for
Canine Reproductive Services



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PROTECT YOUR BREEDING PROGRAM

California law requires that reproductive services for dogs—such as semen collection, freezing, and storage—be performed by or under the supervision of a California-licensed veterinarian. This ensures the health and safety of your breeding animals and protects the integrity of your program.

The Veterinarian's Role in Semen Collection

Semen collection is more than just a routine procedure—it's a medical process that requires precision, hygiene, and expertise. Licensed veterinarians play a critical role in ensuring the health of your stud dog and the success of your breeding program.

Here's what a licensed veterinarian does during semen collection:

- **Examination Before Collection**
 - » Evaluates the dog's overall health and reproductive soundness.
 - » Screens for infectious diseases like brucellosis, which can harm breeding stock.
- **Safe and Humane Collection Techniques**
 - » Uses sterile equipment and methods to prevent contamination.
 - » Ensures the dog is handled gently and professionally to minimize stress or injury.
- **Semen Evaluation**
 - » Assesses sperm motility (movement), morphology (shape), and concentration.
 - » Identifies abnormalities that could affect fertility or signal underlying health issues.
- **Documentation and Recordkeeping**
 - » Provides accurate records for stud services, semen shipments, and breed registries.
 - » Ensures traceability and compliance with California veterinary regulations.

Risks of Non-Veterinarian Semen Collection

Using unlicensed individuals for semen collection can lead to:

- **Injury or trauma** to the dog from improper handling.
- **Contamination** of semen samples, reducing fertility or spreading disease.
- **Missed diagnoses** of reproductive disorders or infections.

Understanding Semen Quality: What It Means for Your Breeding Program

Licensed veterinarians assess semen using three key indicators:

- 1. Sperm Quality** refers to the overall health and viability of the semen sample. High-quality sperm increases the likelihood of successful fertilization and healthy litters.
- 2. Motility** measures how well sperm move. Active, forward-moving sperm are essential for reaching and fertilizing the egg. Poor motility can drastically reduce fertility rates.
- 3. Morphology** evaluates the shape and structure of sperm. Normal sperm have an oval head and a long tail. Abnormal shapes—like double heads or kinked tails—can impair function and reduce the chances of conception.

What Is a Semen Dose?

A semen dose is the amount of viable sperm required to achieve fertilization during artificial insemination. The number of doses produced from a single collection depends on:

- Sperm concentration (how many sperm cells are present).
- Motility (how well the sperm move).
- Morphology (the shape and structure of the sperm).

Licensed veterinarians use specialized equipment to evaluate these factors and determine how many effective doses can be safely prepared from a single collection.

What Happens When Dose Counts Are Overestimated?

When a semen collector overestimates the number of doses, it can lead to serious consequences, such as:

1. Failed Pregnancies

- Inseminations may contain too few viable sperm to achieve fertilization.
- Breeders may lose valuable breeding opportunities and incur financial loss.

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2. Wasted Time and Resources

- Shipping and insemination costs may be spent on ineffective doses.
- Breeders may face financial loss paying for storage of unviable sperm.
- Female dogs may go through unnecessary procedures with no results.

3. Misleading Records

- Stud dog performance may appear better than it is, skewing breeding decisions.
- Breeding contracts and guarantees may be compromised.

4. Loss of Genetic Material

- Poor handling and dilution may damage sperm, reducing future breeding potential.
- Overextended samples may not survive freezing or thawing.

What Is Semen Freezing?

Semen freezing—also known as cryopreservation—is the process of preserving sperm cells at ultra-low temperatures for future use. When done correctly, frozen semen can remain viable for years and be shipped worldwide for breeding.

The Science Behind Proper Freezing

To ensure sperm survival and fertility, licensed veterinarians use medical-grade protocols, such as:

- **Cryoprotectants:** Special solutions are added to protect sperm cells from ice damage during freezing.
- **Controlled Cooling Rates:** Semen is cooled gradually to prevent cellular shock and structural damage.
- **Liquid Nitrogen Storage:** Samples are stored at -196°C in secure, monitored tanks to maintain long-term viability.
- **Post-Thaw Evaluation:** Motility and morphology are assessed after thawing to confirm fertility potential.

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Risks of Improper Freezing

When freezing is done incorrectly—especially by unlicensed individuals—the consequences can be severe, such as:

- **Cell Damage:** Ice crystals can rupture sperm membranes, rendering them infertile.
- **Loss of Genetic Material:** Valuable stud lines can be compromised or lost.
- **Failed Inseminations:** Poor post-thaw quality can lead to unsuccessful breeding attempts.
- **Legal & Ethical Issues:** California law requires veterinary oversight for semen freezing.

Licensed veterinarians are trained to:

- Handle biological material safely and ethically.
- Use validated freezing protocols and equipment.
- Maintain accurate records for breed registries and contracts.
- Ensure compliance with California veterinary regulations.

What Is Transcervical Insemination (TCI)?

TCI is a non-surgical method of artificial insemination in dogs. It uses a rigid endoscope to guide a catheter through the cervix and deposit semen directly into the uterus.

Licensed veterinarians bring essential expertise and equipment to the procedure, such as:

- **Accurate Timing:** Veterinarians use hormone testing to pinpoint ovulation, maximizing success.
- **Specialized Equipment:** TCI requires an endoscope and sterile technique to avoid infection or trauma.
- **Health Screening:** Veterinarians assess the female dog's reproductive health and detect conditions that could affect fertility.
- **Legal Compliance:** In California, reproductive procedures like TCI must be performed by or under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian.

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Risks of Unlicensed TCI

When untrained individuals attempt TCI, the consequences can be serious, such as:

- **Physical Injury:** Improper catheter placement can damage the cervix or uterus.
- **Infection:** Non-sterile technique can introduce bacteria, leading to pyometra or infertility.
- **Failed Pregnancies:** Poor timing or technique can reduce the chance of conception.
- **Legal Ramifications:** Performing TCI without licensed veterinarian oversight violates California veterinary law and may result in fines or enforcement action.

Protect Your Dogs and Your Program

TCI is a powerful tool in canine reproduction—but only when performed correctly. Always verify that insemination procedures are conducted by or under the supervision of a California-licensed veterinarian.

To verify your veterinarian's license, visit www.search.dca.ca.gov/.

Protect Your Investment and Your Animals. Demand Accuracy.

Always ask who is performing semen collection and dose preparation. In California, these services must be performed by or under the supervision of a California-licensed veterinarian. It's not just about compliance—it's about confidence in your breeding success.

Have You Been a Victim of Unlicensed Practice? Report It.

If you believe you have been a victim of unlicensed practice, please report it through the California Veterinary Medical Board's online complaint portal: www.breeze.ca.gov/datamart/loginCADCA.do.



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