CANINE BRUCELLOSIS
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Causal organism: Brucellosis is a venereal infection in dogs is caused by *Brucella canis*, a bacteria.

Transmission: Brucella is transmitted most commonly during breeding or following contact with infected aborted tissue. The bacteria can cross a dog’s mucous membranes and be transported to various tissues in the body, including lymphatic tissue, genital tract tissue and sometimes non-reproductive tissues such as intervertebral discs, eyes and kidneys.

Clinical signs: Infected adults dogs are rarely severely sick because the bacteria is not very virulent. Possible signs in infected males include inflammation of the testicles and/or skin problems. Infected pregnant females usually abort dead pups late in gestation. Non-reproductive abnormalities include oversensitivity to touch, limb weakness or limb paralysis.

Diagnosis: A rapid slide agglutination test using a blood sample can be used as a quick and inexpensive way to detect antibodies to Brucella, indicating past exposure and possible infection. Other tests using a blood sample may be used to give additional information, because false positive screening tests occur commonly due to cross reactions with other bacteria. A negative test is reliable. Semen samples from infected males may show various sperm abnormalities such as immature sperm and deformities of sperm.

Treatment: It is recommended that infected pets be neutered because they may lead to human infection, to improve the chance of controlling the infection, and because they often become infertile anyway. If antibiotic treatment is attempted, a combination therapy with tetracyclines and aminoglycosides should be tried. Two or more 3-week courses should be given. Relapses are common once antibiotics are stopped, especially if repeated courses were not given. Brucella is a zoonotic disease and infection of humans is possible.