PAW HEALTH NETWORK INC.

FALSE PREGNANCY

ABOUT THE DISEASE

False pregnancy, also called **pseudopregnancy** or **pseudocyesis**, is a condition typically seen in canine patients within two months after a heat cycle where they exhibit some signs of real pregnancy.

Some symptoms may include:
- Engorged mammary tissue, which may even produce milk
- Nesting behavior, such as hiding toys and blankets in one location
- Restlessness
- Abdominal distension
- Lethargy

The underlying risk factors leading to **pseudopregnancy** is not completely known, but the symptoms are caused by a hormone imbalance (progesterone and prolactin). After normal ovulation, the ovary naturally releases progesterone for up to 60 days and then gradually declines if pregnancy has not occurred. Sometimes, a rapid decline in progesterone and rapid increase in prolactin will cause patients to mimic pregnancy.

OBTAINING A DIAGNOSIS

Physical examination and thorough clinical history often yields a diagnosis for **pseudopregnancy**.

If breeding status is unknown, ultrasound can detect true pregnancy in early stages, where as x-rays (radiographs) can detect pregnancy at later stages (over 7 weeks).

TREATMENT

Symptoms typically resolve on their own without treatment.

If symptoms of **pseudopregnancy** extend beyond 8 weeks, contact a veterinarian for further direction.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS
- Typically seen in younger female dogs, approximately two months after heat cycle, and will typically self-resolve.
- Tell the veterinarian about nesting behavior and arranging of the bed. If she has been acting as if she can't get comfortable or waking a lot during the night and pacing around the house in an almost panic-like state, be certain to make the veterinarian aware.