

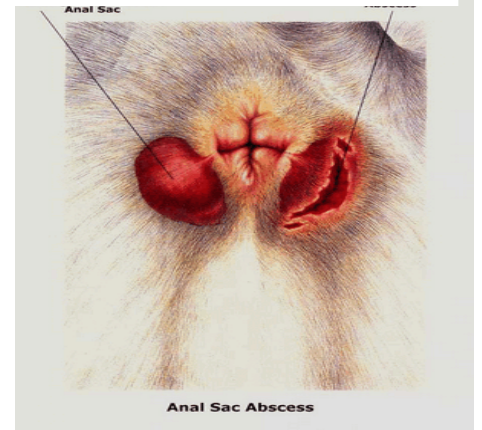
Anal Glands

Both cats and dogs have anal glands (also known as anal sacs). They are located just inside the anus. These glands normally produce a liquid secretion that is typically yellowish in color and smelly. When the pet defecates, this liquid is secreted from two small pores. Dogs and cats have also been known to spontaneously discharge this smelly liquid when they are excited, injured, or startled.

Some dogs and cats can have problems with the anal glands. Common anal gland problems include:

Impaction: Inability of the glands to discharge the liquid. This leads to the accumulation of excessive material that will become dried and hardened. This can cause extreme discomfort.

Anal Gland Abscess: Infection of the anal gland (typically following impaction). This causes inflammation and pain. The abscess can rupture the anal gland and drain blood and pus.



Some dogs and cats may have difficulty expressing the anal gland liquid naturally. There are several reasons this may occur: the liquid produced may be thick and hard to express; the pet may have allergies that adversely affects the anal glands; the pet's body conformation (i.e. overweight animals) may obstruct the small pores. These pets may routinely need assistance with anal gland expression. Your veterinarian or veterinary staff are able to express anal glands.

Symptoms you may notice if your pet is having difficulty expressing their anal glands include: scooting their rectum along the ground; excessive licking of the rectum; strong odor from the rectal area; acting uncomfortable.

Symptoms your pet may have anal gland impaction or abscess include: licking the rectal area; swelling and/or drainage around the rectum; acting uncomfortable; lethargy; decreased appetite.

Be sure to follow the veterinarian's recommendations regarding treatment of your pet's anal glands.