



Guide Dogs for the Blind

Recessed Vulva Guidelines

What is a recessed vulva?

A recessed vulva (or “inverted vulva”) is a common condition in puppies where the vulva is surrounded by skin folds and is only partially visible.

What care is recommended for a recessed vulva?

Urine and debris can collect in the skin folds around a recessed vulva, so cleaning around the vulva may be needed. If you observe debris or redness, clean the vulva area by gently pulling the vulva towards you and gently wiping around the vulva with a non-scented baby wipe.

How often does a recessed vulva need to be cleaned?

The answer depends on the individual dog, and how often debris or urine collects in the folds around the vulva. Some dogs with only mildly recessed vulvas may not need cleaning at all.

We recommend checking the vulva area 2-3 times a week and cleaning when debris, vulvar discharge, or redness is seen. (Remember to gently pull the vulva forward to check the skin fold area.) If there is frequently debris or urine trapped in the fold, daily cleaning may be needed.

When should I contact my Puppy Club leader?

A small amount of white-yellow discharge or dried urine around the vulva is normal, and only requires a routine cleaning (described above).

If you see the following signs please contact your Puppy Club leader to ask if the puppy you are raising needs to see your veterinarian:

- Increasing rash or redness around the vulva despite cleaning.
- Recurrent yellow or green vulvar discharge despite daily vulva cleanings.
- Puppy is excessively licking the vulva (occasional licking is normal).
- Signs of pain or straining when urinating.
- Unusual urine odor or blood in the urine.
- Signs of pain when gently cleaning around the vulva.