

***Info shared by Pitbull SA.***

***Manjaro APBT kennel.***

***South Africa.***

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***Common APBT health issues to be aware of.***

Making sure your newly required puppy or dog or dogs is and stay healthy – daily observing is the key.

The APBT is generally a no nonsense healthy breed and lives on an average of 12 to 14+ years.

**From time to time they do develop some;**

Common canine diseases

Common canine health issues

Some canine diseases that is passed down genetically

Canine diseases that passed down by infected or carrier breeding dogs.

### **Normal maintenance and day to day care and TLC the APBT's require;**

A stable and consistent home.

Daily balanced food once or twice a day – adequate available water.

Safe and warm kennels or special place demarcated for your dog.

Regular preventative vaccinations.

Regular worming.

Regular flea and tick control – also in the kennel and in sleeping gear.

Make sure that you are providing enough love, TLC, on hand attention and adequate daily exercise to your dog.

This breed is a working, sporting, and performance game breed of dog.

### **Good advice.**

Immediately on arrival of your puppy or dog at your home take your new puppy to a licensed Veterinarian for a thorough exam – blood / stool work test (with the given breeders medical history and health and kennel health history record certification in hand) -and then be advised by your Vet for any follow up booster vaccinations dates and get a worming program to follow as the case may be - at the same time ask about possible diets and or supplements to the food you intending giving. (This you also should get fittest hand from the breeder).

### **Be aware of the possibility of skin allergies (at the vet visit he will check for this).**

With daily interaction with your dog at home you will inspect the skin of the dog and immediately see any dandruff or skin problems.

Like many other breeds any semi adult and adult dogs the APBT are also susceptible to various types of skin allergies including ...

From flea bite, skin mites, seasonal allergies or food allergies.

They can be allergic to specific grains or protein from various commercial feed brands, from grass, grass seeds, dust, or other environmental elements like pollen and or staph.

In the worst cases, these allergies can and might progress to widespread rashes and hives and can result in itchy, bumpy skin rashes and can cause the dog to scratch so vigorously that it results in serious skin or bacterial infections.

It is also possible that the underlying cause for this is an inherited autoimmune disorder even if the parent dogs are not exhibiting any skin problems.

The best thing you can do as responsible APBT owner is keep a close watch for early allergy symptoms and don't let it get out of hand without consulting your vet for a skin scrape test and or treatment. If you catch any of these problems early - you can usually use skin moisturizers or various veterinary prescribed products or over the counter products or special feeds to prevent an all-out flare-up. Good practice is to know your Veterinarian and have your dog regularly check-up and to follow their recommendations.

### **Ringworm.**

Ringworm is also a fungus skin infection (not a worm).

The cause of ringworm is a common fungus that infects the skin and causes a scaly and bumpy red patch to form on the infected area.

It is contagious, and ringworm can spread by contact or by sharing clothes that have also come in contact with the infected area.

Generally, the treatment is to apply an antifungal cream – this from your Vet (always keep some in your v dog medicine cabinet) apply some to the area for a prolonged period until the infection resolves.

### **Be aware of possible hip and elbow weakness (dysplasia.)**

Dogs are testes at 12 months of age and yearly thereafter - tests should be performed.

Like with many others dog breeds (also with humans) hip and or elbow dysplasia could be a common genetic abnormality but also more so related to over exercise or over conditioning or to early heavy power or weight conditioning or other legwork workouts.

Symptoms do not show up right away and as with humans will give discomfort and pain in later life.

Hip dysplasia is usually caused by a poorly formed and/or hip joint that became loose over time from various reasons - mostly by over strenuous exercise or due to the work done by a working dog and by conditioning programs.

Especially at to pups and young dogs at to early an age which causes abnormal cartilage wear and aggravation in the joint.

**Also with wrong lifelong diets and a lack of calcium.**

This in turn causes arthritis and deformation of the joint that can lead to trouble walking, jumping, and climbing and pulling weights in competition.

It can affect one or both hips or elbows and can be painful and debilitating to the point that it limits the dog's normal mobility.

**Know this!** Surgery for this condition is possible - but correct age restricted conditioning, feeding and minerals is of utmost importance as with every species ...especially as with the APBT working sporting performance dog.

When decided to get an APBT puppy, you can ask the breeder (usually given) to show a Veterinarian or puppy wellness check certification and also prove that both of the breeding parents do not have hip dysplasia. Since hip dysplasia could be hereditary, this is a good way of screening for potential hip dysplasia in APBT puppies at the time of performing a physical health check at 6 – 8 weeks of age but not full prove.

All puppies at this age hips and elbow joints are normally still loose at this time – a physical health check at this age bears no meaning on hip dysplasia.

Conscientious, knowledgeable breeders will have this information on file.

**It is imperative that your APBT gets plenty of regular exercise.**

With adult dogs run your adult dog at least 15 - 30 minutes every day and with any amount of walking –also leash walking -will be adequate.

If you don't have a big enough yard to allow your dog to run at full speed, be sure to take the dog to a safe off leash place or beach a few times a week to keep their hip joints limbered up.

**The dog's diet also plays a critical role in reducing the severity of possible hip dysplasia.**

Carefully select dog food that does not contain corn, soy, or wheat and that do have adequate calcium balance.

Also make sure your APBT is getting omega 3's with EPA & DHA in their diet.

**About blind dogs.**

APBT like other breeds of dogs are prone to congenital cataracts which are similar to cataracts in humans –as they grow older –senior dogs.

The eyes become cloudy and unable to translate light to the retina efficiently.

Most often (but it is possible), APBT's do not advance to blindness, and their cataracts are easily treated with surgery.

*{see article about blind dogs on this web site}.*

**About deafness.**

Deafness could be a genetic predisposition and some of dogs are born deaf, and many become deaf after a neither serious ear infection nor accident.

Oftentimes, when owners don't know their dog is deaf, they assume it's misbehaving or ignoring their commands, often resulting in APBT abuse.

It's important for owners to have their APBT tested if they have any inclination that their dog might be deaf.

{See article about deaf dogs on this web site}.

### **About congenital heart disease.**

Like in humans some dogs from any breed are afflicted with congenital heart disease which could be present from birth.

When this is present, the dog might be born with a very narrow connection between the heart & the aorta which can cause symptoms as mild as a heart murmur and as severe as sudden death.

This especially needed to be checked if your APBT will be conditioned for any ability discipline.

This abnormality can be detected with a simple x-ray or electro cardiogram.

Dogs with a mild abnormality can live a normal and healthy life, but those with more severe defects might probably require surgery.

If the congenital heart disease is serious enough, often dogs do not live past the first year.

### **Stomach bloat - gastric dilatation or torsion in dogs.**

Gastric dilatation volvulus (also known as bloat or a twisted stomach) is a medical condition in which the stomach becomes overstretched by excessive gas content.

This can occur very quickly and then requires immediate surgery.

The stomach actually twists in on itself and cuts off blood flow, causing severe pain and sometimes death.

Because it can happen without warning, dog owners are encouraged to watch for general signs of pain, dry heaving, drooling and pale lips and gums.

The dog may also pace and become overly restless.

Once a dog experiences this stomach torsion, it is highly likely to occur again.

Therefore, during surgery, the dog's stomach is often tacked to prevent recurrence.

### **A sick dog is every dog owner's nightmare –they can't tell you - or can they?**

As your dog's first line of defense against serious illness, it's your job to know if something is wrong.

Because you should know your dog better than anyone else, and to catch it when the dog show you something's not right.

The dog actually can tell you a lot about where it hurts or when feeling "blah" as long as you know what to look for that's why you must handle your dog daily and look for tell-tale problems or signs.

The best way to notice when something's wrong is to get to know your dog when everything's right.

Your daily routine should be observing your dog when feeding, while eating, during exercise or conditioning –just by observing the dog daily. Check your dog all over every day so you know what's normal for your dog.

It's the best way to know will be when the dog is trying to tell you or show something out of the ordinary.

Besides, your dog loves the attention!

### **Common dog illness symptoms.**

Here is a list of the most common sick dog symptoms and what those symptoms could mean.

### **Has your dog's behavior changed?**

\* Lethargy (listlessness) is the most common sign of illness.

Sick dogs often lie quietly in a curled position.

\* Dogs in pain may be irritable and restless, and may hide, dig, pant, and tremble.

- \* Dogs with abdominal pain often stretch and bow.
- \* A dog with breathing difficulties may refuse to lie down or if they do, will keep their head raised.
- \* Confusion, head-pressing (act of pressing the head against objects for no apparent reason), or seizures may indicate neurological problems.

### **Have your dog's eating, drinking, or elimination changed?**

- \* Sick dogs often lose their appetite.

### **Urinating problems.**

At times, though, your dog's urinate behavior may vary from that range.

When that happens, your dog's body may be signaling the onset of a health problem.

Here are some common variations and what they might mean.

Straining to urinate.

- \* A dog that tries but can't produce much urine may have urinary stones, which can be fatal if left untreated.

See a veterinarian immediately.

### **Very dark urine.**

- \* Extremely dark yellow or rust-colour urine may contain blood, which indicates the possibility of a urinary tract infection (UTI). A visit to the Vet is in order.

Housetraining lapses.

A dog that suddenly starts urinating all over the house also needs to see a Veterinarian.

The problem could be a UTI or, if she's also drinking a lot of water, it could be a serious condition such as kidney disease, diabetes or Cushing's disease.

- \* Some endocrine disorders can cause increased appetite.
- \* Increased thirst and urination may indicate kidney disease or diabetes.

\*Frequent, sudden attempts to urinate, especially if only small amounts are produced or if accompanied by signs of pain is a symptom of sickness that may indicate a urinary tract infection.

\* Painful urination, straining to urinate, or blood in the urine may indicate urinary stones.

\* Inability to urinate is a life threatening emergency.

### **Is your dog regurgitating or vomiting (out of the ordinary)?**

\* Regurgitating food right after eating can indicate an esophageal / oesophageal problem.

\* Vomiting food after it's been in the stomach can indicate poisoning, blockage, or a host of problems.

\* Consult your Veterinarian immediately if your dog start vomiting, can't poop, or you observe blood in the poop or vomit (which may resemble coffee grounds), has accompanying fever or pain, or if the vomiting lasts more than a few hours.

### **Diarrhea and or blood in the poop and what I should know about my dogs poop?**

\* Diarrhea is a dog illness symptom that can result from nervousness, a change in diet or water, food sensitivities, intestinal parasites, virus infections, poisoning, or many illnesses.

It's not uncommon for dogs to have blood in their diarrhea, but diarrhea with lots of blood, or accompanied by vomiting, fever, or other symptoms of illness warrants a call to the Veterinarian.

\* Bright red blood in your dog's poop indicates a source lower in the digestive tract, while dark black tarry stools indicate a source higher in the digestive tract.

### **About dog poop.**

\* Dog poop can tell you a lot about your dog's health.

\* Chances are you don't pay much attention to how often your dog does their business or what the results of that business (including dog poop colour) look like.

Dog poop is gross, it stinks and it belongs outside or in a designated indoor spot–yep but it tells a story.

### **But what else can dog poop tell you?**

Surprisingly, quite a lot.

\* A dog's bowel and urinary habits are outward signs of their health status.

It is important to monitor the amount, frequency, colour and consistency of dog poop and urine, giving particular attention to changes in normal pattern.

\* Determining that normal pattern may take time, because bathroom behaviour and dog poop varies from dog to dog.

Still, most dogs' bathroom behaviour fits within a range, starting with their needing to take two to four bathroom breaks each day.

As to what they produce during those bathroom breaks.

\* Dog poop should be moderately firm to firm, and the dog poop colour should be a shade of brown.

### **Straining to defecate.**

If your dog's been trying to defecate for a day or so, but can't, the dog may have a bowel obstruction.

Call your Veterinarian.

If the dog also vomit, call sooner.

### **Dog diarrhea.**

Runny, stinky dog poop may or may not be serious.

Don't feed your dog for a day or so, but make sure the dog has plenty of water.

After a day, start the dog on a bland diet such as a mixture of boiled rice with cooked chicken (without the skin).

If your dog still has the trots after two days, contact your Vet.

If the dog is vomiting, call sooner.

And if the dog is a young puppy that vomits more than once an hour over a half-day period, bring the pup to the Vet immediately.

### **Very dark or black dog poop.**

Black dog poop or very dark brown dog stool may signal bleeding in the upper intestinal tract, which can result from many possible problems.

A veterinarian's attention is needed.

### **Grey dog poop.**

Cement-colour stool may mean that a dog is suffering from an obstruction of the bile duct.

The obstruction could have one of several causes --but, in any case, necessitates a visit to the Vet.

### **Changes in poop's shape.**

If your dog's stool is shaped like thin strips, the large intestine or rectum may be narrowed for some reason.

On the other hand, very large stools may indicate a problem in the small intestine.

Either way, a visit to the Vet is in order.

### **Is your dog coughing?**

Coughing can be caused by foreign bodies, tracheal collapse, tumours, kennel cough, and heart disease, among others.

Coughing that occurs mostly at night or after exercise may suggest congestive heart failure.

Kennel cough is characterized by a gagging or honking cough, often a week after being around infected dogs.

### **Worms - Do you see worms in your dog's poop?**

You as dog owner should regularly deworm your puppy or dog every 1 – 3 months – ask the vet for a program and follow the program you can find various remedies to control hookworms, roundworms whipworms and tapeworms infestation.

### **Is your dog's gum colour off –pale / whitish?**

If you suspect a problem first thing to do check the gum colour.

White gums is a for sure sign that your dog is sick take to a vet immediately.

They should be a deep pink, and if you press with your thumb, they should return to pink within 2 seconds after lifting your thumb.

**Very pale gums** or slow re-pinking may indicate anaemia, shock, or poor circulation.

**Bluish gums or tongue** can mean a life-threatening lack of oxygen. Bright red gums may indicate overheating or carbon monoxide poisoning.

### **Yellow gums jaundice.**

Tiny red splotches may indicate a blood-clotting problem.

Tooth and gum problems will often cause bad breath and pain and inspecting the mouth should be part of your daily routine.

### **What to know about your dog's temperature.**

To take your dog's temperature, lubricate a rectal thermometer and insert it about 5 cm into the dog's anus, leaving it there for about a minute.

Normal is from 38.3 to 38.8 C.

If the temperature is 39.4 C or above, or 36.6 C or below, call your Veterinarian for advice;

if it's 40.5 C or above 35.5 C or below, go to your Veterinarian.