

An Integrative Approach to Anal Gland Health

Developed and reviewed by the members of the Standard Process Veterinary team

The Importance of Healthy Canine Anal Glands

Managing canine anal gland issues is a common, yet complex, challenge in veterinary practice. From impactions to infections and abscesses, anal dysfunction can severely impact a dog's comfort and quality of life. While conventional approaches — such as manual expression, dietary adjustments, and surgical interventions — play a vital role, the integration of glandular therapy as well as other dietary considerations offers promising adjunctive support. This protocol explores the theory that supporting healthy parotid gland function may aid in general detoxification of the gut, thereby promoting healthy anal gland function.

The Connection Between the Parotid Gland and Anal Gland Health

The potential link between parotid gland health and anal gland issues can be explored through several physiological pathways that include immune function, lymphatic drainage, and digestive processes.

1. Immune Function and Antigen Processing

- **Parotid Gland's Role:** The parotid gland contributes to both innate and adaptive immunity by housing various immune cells such as B cells, T cells, macrophages, and dendritic cells. It also produces immunoglobulins like IgA and IgG, which are crucial for mucosal defense.¹
- **Anal Gland's Role:** The anal canal's lamina propria contains numerous lymphoid aggregates, particularly surrounding the anal glands. These lymphoid structures play a role in local immune responses and are involved in conditions like perianal fistulas.²
- **Dietary considerations for support:** Vitamins A, D, C, Zinc, Selenium, Iron, antioxidants, healthy fats, and fiber.

2. Lymphatic Drainage and Detoxification

- **Lymphatic System Function:** The lymphatic system is responsible for draining leaked tissue fluid back into circulation and plays a crucial role in immune surveillance.³
- **Connection Between Glands:** While the parotid and anal glands are part of distinct lymphatic regions (head/neck and pelvic areas, respectively), systemic lymphatic congestion can impact overall fluid drainage and immune function, potentially affecting both glands.
- **Dietary considerations for support:** Spinach, kale, Swiss chard, ginger, vitamin C, antioxidants, fresh, minimally processed diet.

3. Digestive Health and Microbiome Balance

- **Parotid Gland's Contribution:** The parotid gland secretes enzymes like amylase, initiating carbohydrate digestion in the mouth and influencing overall digestive efficiency.
- **Impact on Anal Glands:** Proper digestion and a balanced gut microbiome are essential for forming well-structured stools. Soft or irregular stools can lead to insufficient natural expression of the anal glands during defecation, increasing the risk of impaction or infection.⁴
- **Dietary considerations for support:** Pre, pro, and postbiotics; fiber, omega-3 fatty acids.

4. Stress Response and Nervous System Influence

- **Autonomic Nervous System (ANS):** Both the parotid and anal glands are influenced by the ANS. Stress can alter salivary secretion and may also affect anal gland function, potentially leading to issues like spontaneous expression or discomfort.
- **Dietary considerations for support:** GABA, L-theanine, L-tryptophan, and Magnesium.

Adjunctive Supplement Support



FEATURED PRODUCT

Canine Dermal Support

Suggested Use: **See product label for dosing by weight**

Canine Dermal Support contains whole food ingredients to help support canine patients' general skin health. Canine Dermal Support is also formulated to:

- Maintain proper liver, adrenal, immune, and intestinal function
- Support and maintain the skin's ability to withstand the effects of environmental exposure



Parotid PMG®

Suggested Use: **Dosing by weight****

Introduced in 1955, Parotid PMG contains bovine parotid PMG™ extract, a proprietary Protomorphogen™ blend. PMGs contain a unique profile of nucleotides and peptides from bovine parotid.*†



Calming Comfort Pro

Suggested Use: **See product label for dosing by weight**

Calming Comfort Pro is formulated to promote calm behavior, relaxation, and nervous system health in both dogs and cats.



Canine Enteric Support

Suggested Use: **See product label for dosing by weight**

Canine Enteric Support supports dogs' digestive system and supports the ability of their intestinal cells to regenerate.

An Integrative Approach to Anal Gland Health

In Office/Physical Exam

Benefits for Practitioners:

- **Non-Invasive Option:** Glandular therapy may serve as a part of a multimodal approach for dogs that are not candidates for surgery or other invasive procedures.
- **Client Satisfaction:** Many pet owners prefer natural, holistic approaches. Offering glandular tissue therapy aligns with this preference, enhancing client compliance and satisfaction.
- **Broad Applicability:** Beyond anal gland support. Glandular therapy may be appropriate for dogs with glandular imbalances across the body, serving as a versatile tool for a wide range of clinical interventions.

REFERENCES

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2. Gosselink, Martijn Pieter & An, Harman & Con Ctercteko, Grahame. (2019).
3. Mikhael M, Khan YS. Anatomy, Abdomen and Pelvis: Lymphatic Drainage. 2023 Jul 24. In: StatPearls [Internet]. Treasure Island (FL): StatPearls Publishing; 2025 Jan-. PMID: 32491652
4. Bascharon DVM, J. (2025, February 26). Dog anal glands: Common problems, treatment, and prevention. PetMD.

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† Only veterinary professionals should recommend the use of human dietary supplements for animals. This is intended to serve as a starting point for qualified veterinary professionals in making recommendations of human dietary supplements for animals. Qualified veterinary professionals are expected to apply their own professional judgment as to the appropriate use of human dietary supplements and the correct dose.

**Please contact your Standard Process Representative for the Core Formula Dosing Chart

*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration These products are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.