

Scooting

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Overview

Scooting refers to the act of rubbing or dragging the anal area or perineum (the area between the anus and genitals) on the ground. Typically, the hind legs are extended in front of the animal as the pet drags forward. Dogs will scoot much more commonly than cats. Anything that causes an irritation or itching to the area under the tail may cause an animal to scoot.

The most common cause of scooting is anal gland disease. Diseases of the anal gland include impacted anal glands (by far the most common cause), infected or abscessed anal glands and anal gland tumors. Other causes of scooting include allergic dermatitis (allergies), acute moist dermatitis (hot spots), abnormal materials adhered to the anal area (hair mats or fecal material), tapeworms, skin parasites (fleas or ticks), and perianal fistulas.

Diagnosis and Treatment Notes:

- Scooting is typically diagnosed through history and physical examination findings. Determining the cause of the scooting requires further testing such as a rectal examination, fecal examination, or aspiration or biopsy of a mass.
- Treatment depends on the cause of the scooting, your individual pet, and your veterinarian. Treatment may include manual expression of the anal glands, antibiotics, surgical drainage, topical medications, antihistamines, corticosteroids, parasite control or surgical removal of any tumors or anal glands.

What to Watch for*:

- Dragging the hind end on the ground
- Licking at the anal area
- Quickly circling trying to lick the area
- Licking at air while sitting
- Foul odor from the anal area

- Discharge or swellings in the anal area

** Please notify us if you notice any of the above signs or if you have any questions!*