

VON WILLEBRAND'S SYNDROME

Von Willebrand's Syndrome is a bleeding disorder of both animals and man.

CAUSE of the condition is a deficiency in the amount of a certain protein required to help platelets (blood cells used for clotting blood) seal broken blood vessels.

Although many breeds can be affected, the Doberman is the breed most commonly observed with the condition. Many pets may be carriers of the condition even though not affected themselves. Other breeds showing a high incidence are Chesapeake Bay Retrievers, Scotties, and Shelties.

SIGNS OF THE DISEASE VARY. Many dogs having the condition never show clinical signs. Others may hemorrhage from the nose, bladder, vagina, or mucous membranes. Prolonged bleeding after surgery or injury is common. If uncontrolled hemorrhage continues, it can result in death. The time of life when initial signs are seen also varies. The condition may not be evident until 4 years of age in the Doberman.

SCREENING FOR THE DISEASE can be performed in the veterinary office if the disease is suspected. The test is termed the "Buccal Mucosal Screening Time."

PRECAUTIONS FOR SUSPECTED CASES:

1. Be sure to tell your veterinarian about past bleeding history.
2. Buccal Mucosal Screening Time should be determined before surgery in suspected cases.
3. Avoid medications that decrease clotting ability such as aspirin, phenylbutazone, ibuprofen, ampicillin, amoxicillin, phenothiazine tranquilizers, theophylline, antihistamines, sulfa-based drugs, estrogens, penicillin, and heparin.

TREATMENT. Blood transfusions may be needed to stabilize the acute case. There is no curative treatment to prevent future problems. Follow the above precautions.