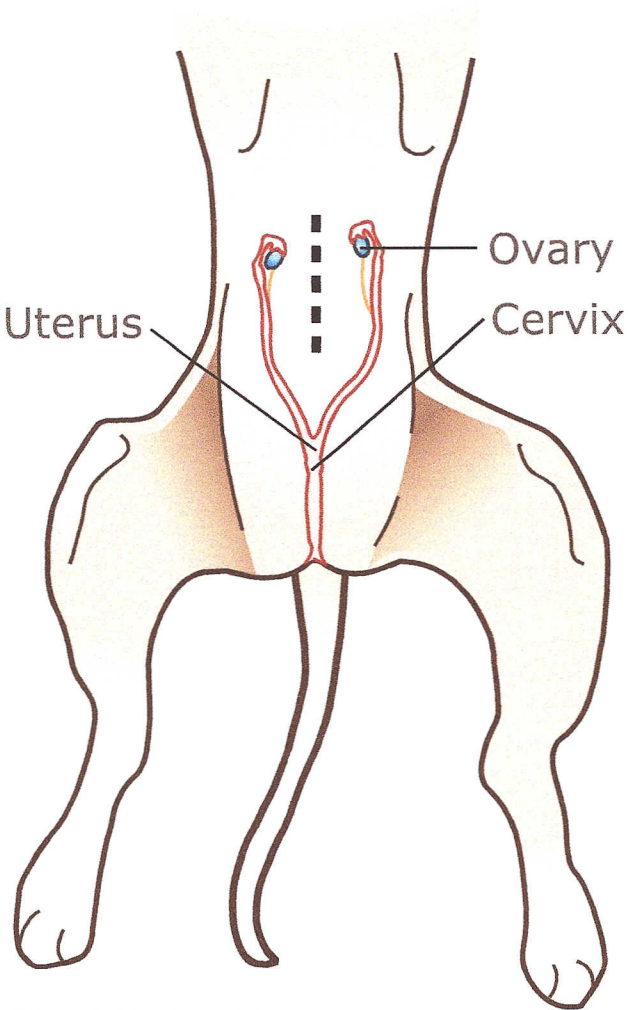


Spay - Dog: Ventrodorsal view of dog showing position of ovariohysterectomy incision.



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The vagina, uterus and ovaries form the reproductive tract of the female dog. The paired ovaries are located deep in the abdomen near the kidneys. The uterus is divided into a body and two horns. In pregnancy, puppies develop in the uterine horns. Pregnancy lasts for 63 days on average. Dogs come into 'heat' or estrus about every 6 months on average, and each cycle lasts for two to three weeks. She will usually be 'receptive' or allow mating 7-10 days into the cycle. Ovariohysterectomy is the scientific term for the surgical procedure commonly called a 'spay'. In this major abdominal surgery, the entire reproductive tract is removed from the cervix to the ovaries. This completely sterilizes the dog and stops her heat cycles. Further information on this subject can be found in our Client Education Handout Series.