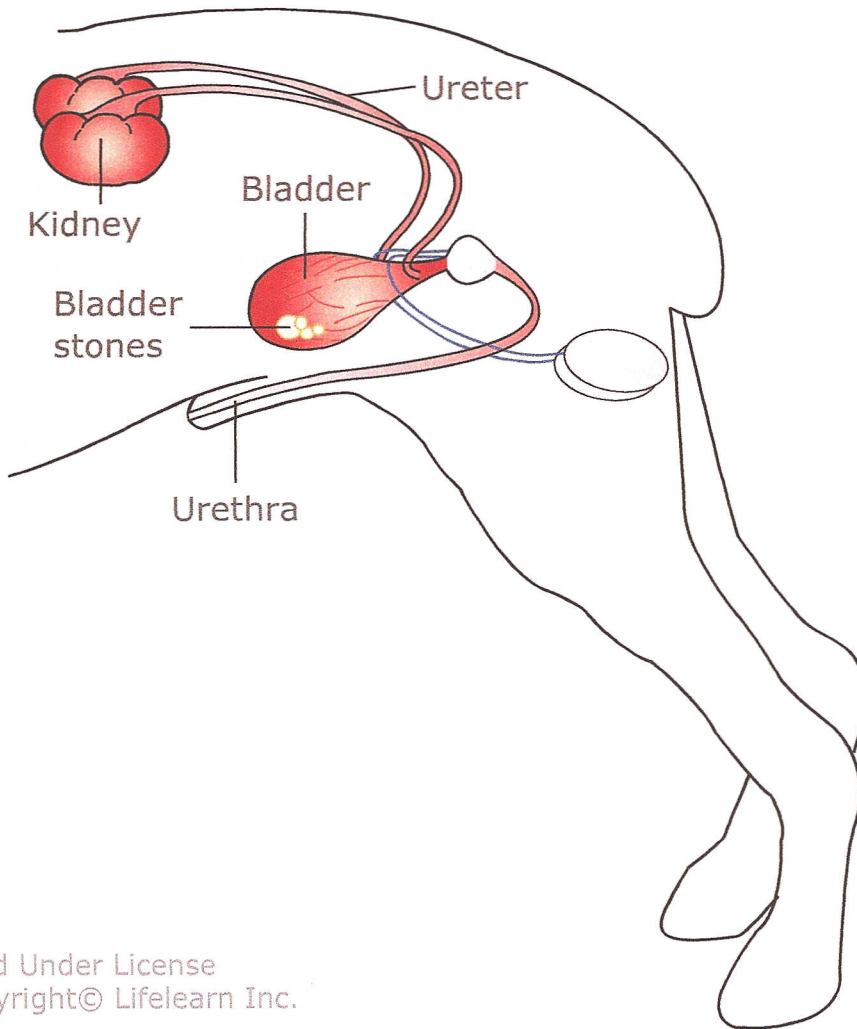


Bladder Stones - Male Dog: Bladder stone formation in the dog.



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Bladder stones in the dog frequently form as a result of an infection. Bladder infections alter the pH of the urine, making it more alkaline. Urine naturally contains minerals that remain in solution unless the urine becomes alkaline. In addition to the change in pH, a urinary infection causes debris such as inflammatory cells to build up in the bladder. When the urine pH is alkaline, crystals will precipitate around the inflammatory debris, forming stones that range in size from tiny sand-like particles to large stones several centimeters in diameter. Bladder stones cause inflammation and worsen the situation. Bladder stones may also form without the presence of an infection. This tends to occur in specific breeds of dogs, and often there is a hereditary cause for the problem. If a stone moves into the urethra, it may get stuck, causing an obstruction. A urinary tract obstruction is a life-threatening emergency. Further information about bladder stones can be found in our Client Education Handout Series.