



We continually update our skills and knowledge so that we stay current with the best practices that can help you and your dog.

cheerfuldogs chronicles

cheerful dogs, happy people

Issue 75

Living With Dogs: How To Manage Your Dog While You're In Labour

As you near your due date, it's time to think about and prepare for managing your dog smoothly through your labour. Here are three tips for that day:



1. Pack a couple of delicious food-dispensing toys, and put them in the freezer for your dog to enjoy in case you go into labour at home. Ideally you will want to labour at home as long as you choose. But remember your dog may respond to the changes in your moods, scents, and behaviours. So if you have a pre-made treat stashed in your freezer when contractions begin, you'll be able to offer your dog something he can focus on while you focus on yourself.
2. It's important to keep moving during early labour. You may experience contractions that cause you to change your breathing and move differently. This can cause stress for some dogs as it's not "normal" behaviour for you. If your dog seems stressed, give him a quiet place where he can relax in another room so you're free to move around.
3. The amniotic fluid surrounding your baby has a unique and distinct scent of its own. So keep in mind that if your water breaks at home, this is the first scent your dog will associate with your baby – dogs have a keen sense of smell. Should this stage of labour happen while you're at home, do your best to remain as calm and positive as possible. It's an opportunity to introduce your dog to the first scent of your precious new baby.

That's it. This is your time and your experience. Focus on you and the baby – your dog will be fine with something to enjoy and do.

Dog quotes

"I like a bit of mongrel myself, whether it's a man or a dog; they're the best for everyday." - George Bernard Shaw



Dogs In Action: Your best running partner

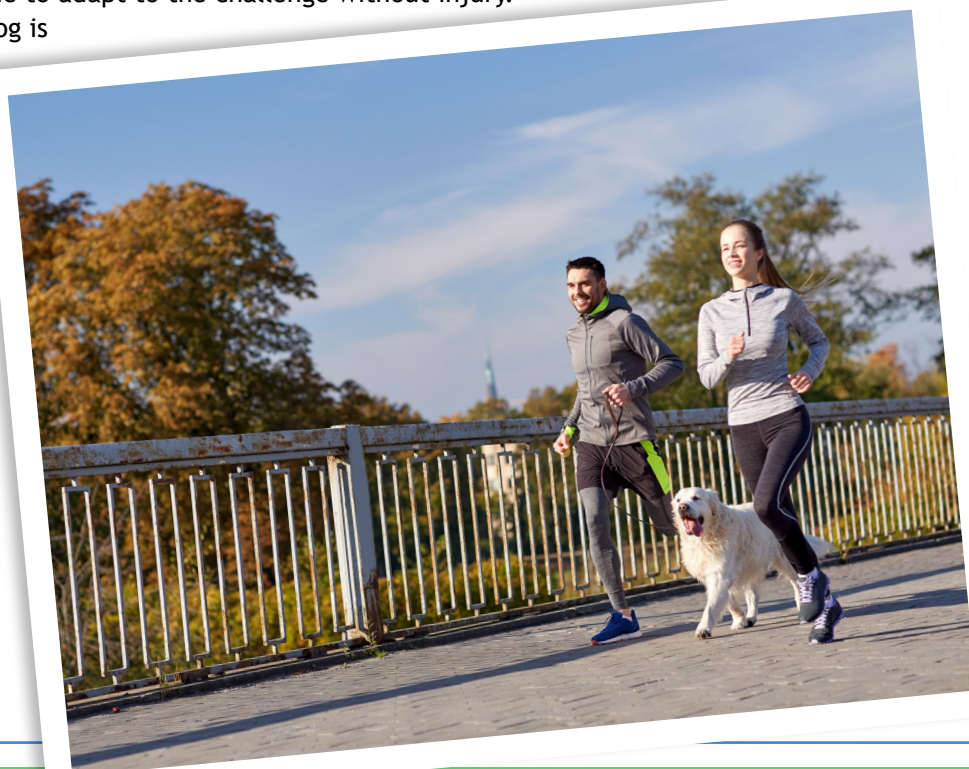
If your adult dog is healthy, loves to run, and is capable of running a respectable distance, you have the makings of a wonderful running partner – whether Labrador or toy poodle cross. Dogs don't mind if you rouse them at the crack of dawn and never fuss about runny noses or side stitches. But unless you happen to share your life with a born side runner (like Dalmatians, once bred to run alongside fire engines), you may have to teach your dog the human version of running. Dogs like to go faster than people, stop to check out interesting smells along the route, and chase the occasional cat.

If you haven't done so already, the first step is to teach your dog good on-leash manners during walks. Then proceed to walks interspersed with periods of jogging and finally graduate to full runs. Build distance and time slowly – in increments of 10 minutes, for example – to ensure your dog's muscles and connective tissue have time to adapt to the challenge without injury.

Don't be discouraged if your dog is distracted or lags behind; give her time to figure out what she's supposed to do. Running steadily without pause isn't immediately logical to a dog, but if you're patient she will catch on soon and likely love it.



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