

## How our hormones can influence a dog's behaviour.

Dogs can detect any change in brain waves, disease, raised energy and any change within the body both in other canines and humans. Humans are now training dogs to 'sniff out' drugs and explosives, to detect cancer in humans and also alert people who suffer from epilepsy that they are about to have a seizure.

Is there any wonder that dogs can detect any rise or change in hormones both in males and females? It is vitally important to canines that they 'understand' what is happening around them as they are wired up to survive and in their world reproduction is key to the survival of the pack (or tribe or family).

As boys approach puberty there is an increase of testosterone, the principal male sex hormone and an anabolic steroid, throughout his body.

In men, testosterone plays a key role in the development of male reproductive tissues such as the testis and prostate as well as promoting secondary sexual characteristics such as increased muscle, bone mass, and the growth of body hair. In addition, testosterone is essential for health and well-being as well as the prevention of osteoporosis.

On average, an adult human male body produces about ten times more testosterone than an adult human female body, but females are more sensitive to the hormone.

From the male dog's (dog) point of view, the rise in testosterone in the human (as young as 9 years old) could indicate competition for the alpha male status. The dog will ask questions of the boy and the boy, or a responsible adult must give the dog answers. The dog is asking who is in charge, as only alphas/leaders can breed and should produce this hormone and the answer, consistently, must be, the humans are. If the dog is not given this answer it will assume leadership and has every right to assert his authority, possibly with his teeth, in the only way he knows.

It is quite common for the dog (male) to prevent the human male getting too close to the human female and this can be any relationship, mother and son, husband and wife etc.

Conversely, the female dog (bitch) will gravitate to the human male as she recognises the rise in hormones and is on hand, as alpha/leader female, to ensure that if any reproduction takes place she is involved.

It is quite common for the bitch (female) to prevent the human female getting too close to the human male and this can be any relationship, mother and son, husband and wife etc.

In women, at puberty, the body produces hormones which promote the adult sexual development and urges, as well as the mood swings we all associate with puberty. After that, most women then settle into a more or less regular pattern of ovulation. Oestrogen is thought of as the primary female hormone and it affects almost every organ in the body. Oestrogen plays a critical role in bone building and is thought to have important protective effects on the cardiovascular system.

Progesterone, which is made only during the second half of the menstrual cycle, prepares the uterine lining for an egg to implant, but progesterone also has other important effects on many of the tissues sensitive to oestrogen. Testosterone, also made in the ovaries, plays a role in generating energy and developing muscle mass

Menopause brings major, permanent changes to the hormone levels and hormone balance of your body.

The bitch will challenge the female as she approaches puberty( this could be as young as nine years old)and frequently, perhaps monthly, throughout her life as her hormones fluctuate. Bitches will also challenge a pregnant female, as only the alpha /leader females should 'come into season' or breed.

The dog (male) will challenge the pregnant woman by being over protective and often, not permitting her to carry out any duty that he finds may represent a threat to the unborn offspring. The pack/ tribe/ family will not survive if there are no new members.

Maybe you can now understand why hormones play such an important role in our relationships with our dogs.

The only solution is to provide strong leadership, in a way the dog understands, calmly and consistently.

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