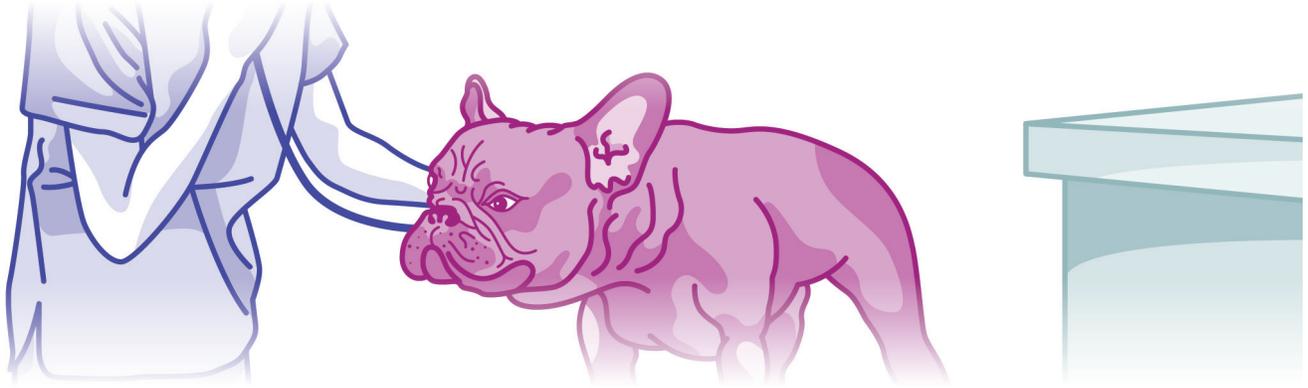


**CLAIM OF THE MONTH**

**SALIVARY MUCOCELE**

**Pet:** : "Pearl," a 2-year-old spayed female French Bulldog



**PEARL'S STORY:**

In mid-June, Pearl's family became worried when she suddenly developed swelling on the left side of her face. Suspecting an insect sting or bite, they gave her Benadryl. The swelling subsided a bit, but never truly went away. A non-painful mass remained at her left jawline. Pearl is a nervous Frenchie, so she did not allow her veterinary team to get a close look at the lump. Given the painless nature of the swelling, Pearl's vets decided to manage Pearl's anxiety first, to facilitate a better examination in the future. In the meantime, the family promised to monitor the lump for changes or resolution.

Unfortunately, the lump didn't resolve. Pearl returned for sedation and a closer examination. Palpation revealed that the lump was fluid-filled. Her medical team took some samples and sent them off to the lab. While they waited for results, Pearl was given antibiotics and anti-inflammatories in case of infection.

Pearl returned for several more examinations and procedures to drain and treat the lump. Unfortunately, the swelling returned each time.

Eventually, a surgical specialist ordered a CT scan, which was able to determine that the lump and subsequent infection was caused by a salivary mucocele.

**ABOUT THE CONDITION: SALIVARY MUCOCELE**

Salivary glands are located near a dog's eyes, ears, jaw, and under the tongue. Salivary ducts transport saliva from those glands to the inside of the mouth, emptying behind the upper and lower molars, and lower canine teeth. When the salivary glands or salivary ducts become blocked or damaged, saliva begins to collect in a pocket under the skin. This is visible as a swelling of the face, jaw, oral mucosa, or neck. The saliva-filled cyst is called a salivary mucocele. A salivary mucocele may also be called a sialocele, salivary cyst, or ranula.

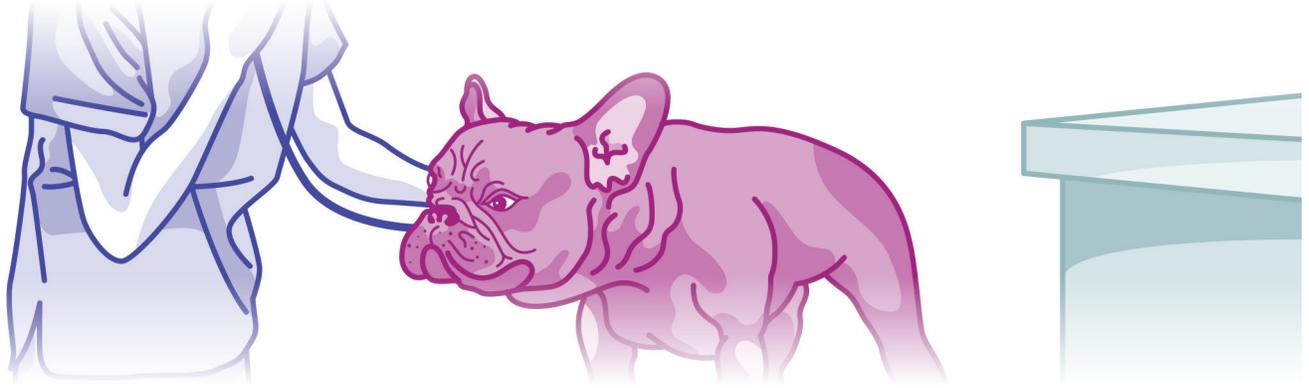
Sometimes, a salivary mucocele develops after a trauma, like rough play with another dog. Other mucoceles occur because debris or inflammation block the salivary ducts. Some dogs even have a genetic predisposition to the condition. Often, the cause of a particular dog's mucocele is never known for certain. The swelling is usually soft and painless in an uncomplicated case. Sometimes, the fluid in the cyst can become infected with bacteria, which can cause heat, pain, swelling, and fever.



**CLAIM OF THE MONTH**

**SALIVARY MUCOCELE**

Continued...



This condition is usually diagnosed with a combination of history, physical examination, and microscopic evaluation of fluid from the cyst. Sometimes, advanced diagnostics are required to determine the location of the problem, and to rule out other conditions like abscesses, foreign bodies, or tumors.

**TREATMENT**

Treating salivary mucoceles can be tricky. Draining the cyst usually only provides temporary relief, as the cyst tends to re-fill with saliva quickly. Usually, the affected salivary gland needs to be removed surgically to prevent ongoing accumulation of fluid. Surgery usually also includes the placement of a temporary surgical drain to allow remaining fluid to escape, and to reduce the chance of infection.

Pearl was hospitalized for surgery to remove salivary glands on the left side of her face. She spent the night in hospital for monitoring and was discharged to her family with pain medication, antibiotics, and hope for a speedy recovery.

**CLAIM OUTCOME**

Over the course of six visits, Pearl's family paid more than \$11,000.00 for the diagnosis and treatment of her salivary mucocele. Their Pets Plus Us Accident and Illness Max plan reimbursed them \$8,482.13 of those fees. We're happy to hear that your beautiful face is on the mend, Pearl!

