

NORMAL OVARIAN FUNCTION IN THE CAT

The queen is seasonally polyestrous, cycling every 4-30 (14-19 modal) days in the presence of a day length of or exceeding 14 hours. Prolonged anestrus results from decreasing day length, and estrus onset results from increasing day length. Onset of puberty occurs at 4 to 12 months of age, and is influenced both by photoperiod and body condition of the queen. Stages of the estrus cycle include proestrus (1-2 days), exhibited in only a minority of queens; estrus (2-19 days), which is the follicular phase and time of receptivity to mating; postestrus (2-7 days) which is an interestrus interval in queens that are not bred; diestrus (~45 days if not pregnant, ~60 days if pregnant) which is the luteal phase that follows induction of ovulation; and anestrus (~ 3 months) which is time of reproductive quiescence in late autumn months in queens exposed to a natural photoperiod. The queen is an induced ovulator and requires more than one copulation to ensure ovulation.