



CANINE COUGH

What pet owners should know...

What is Canine Cough?

It is often improperly referred to as "Kennel" Cough, as it can be contracted anywhere dogs congregate, such as: greeting neighborhood dogs on the street, in a dog park or dog event, waiting in the lobby of a veterinary office or in a grooming shop.

Infectious tracheobronchitis is a highly contagious, upper-respiratory disease that is spread through the expired air of an infected dog, much the same way that human colds are transmitted. It can be caused by viral infections such as canine distemper, adenovirus or parainfluenza, and most commonly as Bordatella Bronchiseptica, a bacterial infection.

The incubation period is 3-7 days. The main symptoms are a dry, hacking, non-productive cough followed by retching, sneezing and nasal discharge. Symptoms can last 7-21 days. Dogs who are vaccinated may benefit from a shorter period of symptoms. Although the coughing sounds bad, the dog's general state of health and alertness is unaffected. Administering antibiotics is important as it prevents the infection from developing into a secondary infection, such as pneumonia.

Can my dog be vaccinated against it?

Yes. Vaccines against Parainfluenza, Adenovirus Type 2 and Bordatella are routinely given as part of an adult dog's yearly check-up. These vaccines are made from one of over 100 different strains of the virus. Some strains are not included and therefore, there is no prevention against them. This is why dogs who are vaccinated can still contract Canine Cough.

Some veterinarians do not administer the Bordatella vaccine as part of a dog's yearly vaccines. Notify your vet if your dog is groomed regularly, frequents dog parks and dog events or attends a day care or boarding facility.

The University of Florida School of Veterinary Medicine recommends the Bordatella vaccine be given every 6 months if your dog is boarded frequently. Consult your veterinarian for his or her vaccination recommendations.

If overdue, vaccines take days to weeks to stimulate a dog's protective immunity. If your pet is past due for his/her Bordatella or parainfluenza vaccine, it is recommended that it be given at least two weeks prior to a boarding, day care or grooming appointment. The intranasal Bordatella vaccine becomes effective more quickly than the injection.

Is Canine Cough a constant problem?

No. Like human colds and the Flu, it is often seasonal. When veterinarians begin to see cases, they typically come from dogs throughout the community, not just those who were recently boarded. Summertime and the winter holiday season tend to be the local seasons we see colds develop.

We are fortunate in Central Florida to have many dog parks and pet events. Unfortunately, these activities perpetuate contagious airborne diseases. In addition, exposure to puppies with immature immune systems and recently adopted shelter dogs is inevitable in these situations, even in waiting areas of veterinary clinics.

5 ways you can help us keep colds out of The Green K9...

How is Canine Cough Treated?

As with the common human cold, there is no "cure" for an upper respiratory infection in dogs. It must run its course. Dogs can recover without medication, however; most veterinarians will prescribe antibiotics. Having a cold can lower a dog's resistance to secondary diseases, such as pneumonia.

A dog with Canine Cough must be isolated from other dogs immediately and at least until a full course of antibiotics is completed.

Consult your veterinarian before re-introducing your dog to other dogs.

The Green K9 will not permit a dog to return to day care until after the course of antibiotics is completed.

Why can't a boarding facility prevent my dog from catching a cold?

For the same reasons schools, child day care centers and hospitals can't prevent children and adults from catching colds or the Flu.

There is no full proof preventative that exists today. No amount of sanitation or personalized care can provide 100% prevention from airborne bacteria or viruses.

All that a quality pet care facility can do is require all dogs be current on their vaccinations, refuse admission of dogs showing symptoms, and those recently purchased from a pet store or recently adopted from a shelter, provide proper fresh air exchange and keep the air filters clean.

Why do some dogs in a boarding or day care facility contract colds and others do not?

Dogs that attend day care on a regular basis are frequently exposed to other dogs and are more likely to build a strong immunity against common colds. Even during a widespread outbreak, only a small percentage of exposed dogs may be affected. In fact, some dogs are carriers and may never show symptoms.

Dogs that have never boarded before, puppies and immune compromised dogs are at a higher risk of catching a cold in a boarding facility. These dogs encounter two conditions that do not exist at home, proximity to a number of potentially contagious dogs and the excitement and possible stress of a new environment. This can result in a lowered resistance to disease. These same factors explain why children are more likely to catch a cold in school.

1. Avoid dog parks at least two weeks prior to boarding.
2. Keep your dog away from dogs who have just been adopted from a shelter.
3. Avoid contact with puppies who are too young to be fully vaccinated.
4. Avoid groom shops who do not require vaccinations.
5. If your dog is around groups of dogs frequently, update your pet's Bordatella vaccine every 6 months as opposed to once a year.

Canine Cough does not originate in pet care facilities. It is brought in by a dog who is incubating and non-symptomatic at the time of check in. It is then passed on to other dogs through the air or their saliva while playing together.