

Canine Cough – Fact Sheet

Canine Cough is one of the most common infectious diseases of dogs - just like the common cold with humans. It is a contagious respiratory disease that is spread between dogs just as easily as colds are between humans.

Commonly referred to as 'Kennel Cough'... Canine Cough can, however, infect dogs anywhere that dogs gather, such as at parks, beaches, obedience classes, dog shows, grooming parlours, over the back fence, day care centres or at kennels.

Canine Cough can be caused by a number of different viruses and bacteria but the most common infectious agents are *Bordatella bronchiseptica* and the Canine *Parainfluenza* virus. Some dogs can carry the infection for weeks without showing any signs of disease. These dogs act as a source of infection for other dogs.

The classical sign is a harsh, hacking cough that often finishes with gagging. Severely affected dogs may have a fever, be depressed, not eat and can develop pneumonia. The coughing bouts can persist for a number of weeks, despite treatment, creating significant discomfort for both the dog and its owner.

Treatment may include antibiotics, and symptomatic therapy... such as cough medicine as prescribed by your veterinarian.

Most Vets will recommend that dogs should be vaccinated against both *Bordatella bronchiseptica*, and Canine *Parainfluenza* virus. The vaccine comes in both an injectable and nasal spray form and you should speak with your vet as to what will be more beneficial for your dog.

A dog may be vaccinated and still contract canine cough, however their symptoms can sometimes just be very mild in comparison to their unvaccinated counterparts. Signs may just be a runny nose as opposed to the harsh cough. Recently, local vets have reported dogs sneezing rather than having the typical cough. In this instance some vets may still prescribe antibiotics (mainly to minimise the risk of secondary infection rather than cure the cough) and others may offer immune system stimulants.

Please speak with your vet about the best options for your pet.

Club Canine recommends:

1. You ensure your dog's vaccinations including their 'kennel cough' vaccination are up-to-date.
2. If your dog is exhibiting signs of a cold or cough, get them off to the vet. Any dogs that are exhibiting signs of a cold should stay at home until the cold passes so we can minimise spread. Please let us know so we can keep track of who has had the cold.
3. If your dog turns up to the centre or starts to exhibit signs here, they will be separated to a nice, comfortable area. They can stay there and have some nice treats... until you are able to get them off to your vet for a checkup.

Club Canine takes these steps to minimise the spread of any cold by:

1. Ensuring all dogs' vaccinations are up-to-date before entering the centre.
2. Separating any dogs with symptoms of the cold
3. Thorough cleaning with specially designed cleaning products takes place every day and night to keep any bugs at the centre at bay
4. And, as usual, we closely monitor all dogs for the whole time they are here

This fact sheet provides general advice only. Owners concerned about their pet should seek advice from their veterinarian.