

KENNEL COUGH... WHAT IS IT?

Canine Infectious Respiratory Disease (CIRD), frequently called “Kennel Cough.”

- A very common upper respiratory infection that is highly contagious among dogs.
- Its sometimes referred to as Bordetella.
- CIRD can be caused by several types of viruses and bacteria; like Bordetella bronchiseptica or Canine influenza.
- Infection can be from direct dog-to-dog contact, airborne contact, using the same bowl or toys as an infected dog, or from a human touching an infected dog and not washing their hands. The illness is spread among dogs the same way the common cold is spread among humans.
- Dogs often develop clinical signs associated with kennel cough 2 to 14 days after exposure.
- Dogs may be infectious before showing clinical signs.

Clinical Signs of Kennel Cough

- A persistent cough is the most common symptom
- Retching (dry heaving)
- Sneezing
- Watery nasal discharge
- In mild cases, dogs are often active and eating normally
- Severe reactions may occur in a small number of cases, which may include pneumonia.



Diagnosis

Based upon which symptoms exist and the length of onset. Laboratory testing is necessary to reach a definitive diagnosis.



Treatment (depends on the severity of the infection)

- If your dog is alert, active, eating well, and has only minor symptoms; your veterinarian may only prescribe general supportive care like rest and good hydration and nutrition.
- More severely affected dogs benefit from medications that reduce inflammation and coughing.
- If a bacterial infection is present, antibiotics may help shorten the course of the disease. Dogs with pneumonia often need to be hospitalized for more aggressive treatment.

Management and Prevention

In order to prevent the spread of this disease, dogs with kennel cough should be isolated until they are better and no longer contagious. **Dogs going to dog parks, are in play groups, who attend dog shows, or spend time in boarding or day care facilities should be vaccinated against Bordetella bronchiseptica.**

REMINDER: Please talk to your veterinarian about recommended vaccinations for your pet. Protect your pets and the pets in our community.

