

CANINE INFLUENZA | WHAT CAUSES IT?

Canine influenza, or dog flu, is caused by the canine influenza virus (CIV). It is highly contagious.



WHO'S AT RISK?

Dogs of any breed, age, sex or health status are at risk of infection when exposed to CIV, and infection can occur year round. Almost all dogs exposed to CIV will become infected, and the majority (80%) of infected dogs develop flu-like illness. It is not contagious to people.

TREATMENT

Supportive care should be provided to keep the dog as comfortable as possible. Medications may be necessary for severe illness or secondary bacterial infections. Most dogs recover within 2-3 weeks.

HOW IS IT SPREAD?

CIV is easily spread from infected dogs to other dogs through direct contact, coughing and sneezing, contaminated objects (kennel surfaces, food and water bowls, collars and leashes), and people moving between infected and uninfected dogs.

SIGNS OF ILLNESS

The illness ranges from mild to severe. Infected dogs develop a persistent cough and may develop a nasal and/or eye discharge, lethargy, reduced appetite, and fever. Secondary bacterial infections can develop, and may cause more severe illness and pneumonia.

HOW TO PROTECT YOUR DOG

- Talk to your veterinarian about your dog's risk of exposure to CIV and if the canine influenza vaccine is right for your dog.
- Avoid exposing your dog to obviously sick dogs.
- If there is a CIV outbreak in your area, avoid taking your dog to areas where dogs gather.
- If your dog shows signs of illness, isolate them from other dogs and seek veterinary care.
- Wash your hands after handling any dog, and especially after handling a sick dog.
- Do not share equipment (bowls, collars, leashes, kennels, etc) between sick dogs and apparently healthy dogs.

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