



CANINE PARAINFLUENZA

What Causes It

Canine parainfluenza virus (CPIV) is a respiratory virus which is highly contagious and can be one of the causes of canine cough. It is also one of the component factors that cause kennel cough, another highly infectious condition.

Whenever there are dogs in close proximity to others, the condition can spread, so contact with other dogs in dog parks and out walking may potentially place your dog at risk. However, the disease is mainly found and most widely spread between dogs living close together, such as in boarding kennels and rehoming shelters. If the virus is present, even visits to a grooming parlour or a dog-show, can place healthy dogs at risk.

How Is It Transmitted

Canine parainfluenza is transmitted in a variety of ways, including contact with affected dogs and the bowls, bedding and kennels that they use, and by means of the airborne particles from coughing and sneezing.

After infection and potential recovery, dogs can continue to pass on the virus responsible for the condition for up to two weeks.

Signs And Symptoms

Dogs may exhibit a range of symptoms when, so owners should look out for any combination of the following signs:-

- A persistent dry, hacking cough that may become worse after exertion
- Fever and high temperature
- A runny nose or nasal discharge
- Sneezing
- Eye inflammation or weeping eyes, possibly accompanied by conjunctivitis
- Depression, lethargy and loss of appetite

Treatment

It is important to treat the virus and the cause of the infection in affected dogs and also to prevent the condition spreading to other dogs.

While dogs may recover from the virus on their own, in time, this is not the case for all dogs, and the virus will still remain as a risk that is easily spread to other dogs, while one dog is carrying it or affected by it.

- Generally, the dog will be treated with antibiotics to deal with any accompanying bacterial infection, and antiviral treatment may be used to suppress the virus itself to allow time for the body to heal.
- Fluid administered intravenously may be used if the dog has become dehydrated as a result of the condition.
- Cough suppressants can also be given if the dog has a dry, painful cough.
- Painkillers may also be given.

The recovery time and eventual result of treatment will largely depend on the health of the dog in question before they contracted the virus, and the severity of the infection.

Canine parainfluenza can affect the lungs and respiration as well, and persistent coughing over a long period of time can lead to scarring of the lung tissue and other long-term problems.

Prevention

- There are combination vaccines available, that will help combat the canine parainfluenza virus. Make sure your dog has completed his series of vaccinations, including

annual boosters.

- ensure that you keep your puppy or unvaccinated dog away from any dogs that could possibly be infectious.
- Also, routinely clean and disinfect your home (or kennel) to ensure that the virus is not in your dog's living environment.