

Kennel Cough

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Overview

Kennel cough (infectious tracheobronchitis) is a highly contagious inflammation of the trachea (windpipe) and bronchial tree caused by a contagious virus (adenovirus, parainfluenza virus, canine distemper virus) or bacterium (*Bordetella bronchiseptica*). The infectious agents can be transmitted through the air or by contact with contaminated surfaces. Puppies and young dogs are at greatest risk, especially those housed in high-density situations or boarding kennels.

The incubation period from the time the dog first contracts the infection to the time that symptoms develop is typically between 3 to 10 days, and the symptoms can last for days to weeks. Many dogs will have a mild to moderate cough without other signs, which is usually self-limiting. In some cases, the cough lingers and the dog may develop pneumonia or chronic bronchitis.

Diagnosis and Treatment Notes:

- Diagnosis is often made based on clinical signs and excluding other diseases. Upon examination, the windpipe is often sensitive to palpation and may elicit a cough. Chest x-rays are usually normal.
- Treatment depends on the severity of the disease, your individual pet, and your veterinarian. For mild cases, the dog usually recovers with no treatment. For others, cough suppressants and sometimes antibiotics are prescribed to prevent secondary infections. Discuss treatment details when your pet is diagnosed with this condition.

What to Watch for*:

- Excessive dry cough
- Nasal discharge
- Breathing difficulty
- If your pet does not eat
- If your pet is vomiting or acts lethargic

**Please notify us if you notice any of the above signs or if you have any questions!*