

# Parvovirus.

Parvovirus is a serious infectious disease that can affect dogs. Fortunately it is preventable with regular vaccination, which will stop your dog contracting this potentially fatal virus.

## What is Parvovirus?

Parvovirus is a virus that infects the intestines (and sometimes other organs) causing severe vomiting and diarrhoea. It is highly contagious and can be easily caught by unvaccinated dogs.

It is spread via body fluids of infected dogs e.g. in their poo; if an unvaccinated dog eats or licks something that has been in contact with Parvovirus they too could catch it.

Unfortunately, the virus can survive for long periods of time (approximately 6 months) in the environment. It also can take up to 7 days for a dog that has caught Parvovirus to start showing any signs of the disease, so Parvovirus can be spread outside before an owner knows their dog is unwell.






## How do I prevent my dog catching Parvovirus?

Vaccinating your dog is very effective at preventing Parvovirus infection. Young puppies should have some protection against Parvovirus from their mothers, but once this starts to wear off they need a vaccination injection to maintain protection. This is given at 10 weeks of age (they can start their vaccination course at 8 weeks of age to start being protected against other parts of the vaccination course). Your dog will have protection against Parvovirus 1 week later. In some cases, a further vaccination at 16 weeks of ages will be recommended.

After the puppy vaccines, a booster vaccination is given at one year old. After this they only need a vaccination against Parvovirus every 3 years. We do still need to give a yearly booster injection as protection against other diseases that vaccination prevents only last for one year. Don't worry, we can tell from your dog's vaccination record which vaccine your dog needs each year.

## What signs does Parvovirus cause?

Dogs infected with Parvovirus are usually very poorly, with puppies the most severely affected. Signs include:

-  Not wanting to eat or drink.
-  Severe vomiting.
-  Foul smelling bloody diarrhoea.
-  Severe depression.
-  Collapse.

If you suspect your dog could have Parvovirus and has any of the above signs, you should contact the surgery for an appointment straight away. Even if these signs are not caused by Parvovirus, they will need veterinary attention none the less.

There is no specific treatment for Parvovirus itself, but with intensive supportive care in hospital, dogs can recover. The earlier this treatment is started the better the chances of recovery.

Sadly, even with aggressive treatment, Parvovirus can be fatal to your dog so make sure their vaccinations are up to date.

# Distemper.

Distemper is a serious infectious disease that can affect dogs. Fortunately, this disease is now rarely seen in the UK and it is preventable with regular vaccination, which will stop your dog contracting this potentially fatal virus.

## What is Distemper?

Distemper is a virus that infects many body systems, particularly affecting the nervous system and respiratory system. It is highly contagious and can spread to unvaccinated dogs easily.

It is spread via saliva of infected dogs e.g. when they cough or sneeze or via urine; if an unvaccinated dog comes into contact with this they too could catch it.






## How do I prevent my dog catching Distemper?

Vaccinating your dog is very effective at preventing Distemper infection. Young puppies have some protection against Parvovirus from their mothers. Once this starts to wear off they need a vaccination injection to maintain protection. This is given at 10 weeks of age (they can start their vaccination course at 8 weeks of age to start being protected against other parts of the vaccination course). Your dog will have protection against this disease 1 week later.

After the puppy vaccines, a booster vaccination is given at one year old. After this they only need a vaccination against Distemper every 3 years. We do still need to give a yearly booster injection as protection against other diseases that vaccination prevents only last for one year. Don't worry, we can tell from your dog's vaccination record which vaccine your dog needs each year.

## What signs does Distemper cause?

Dogs infected with Distemper can show a wide variety of symptoms, as many different body systems can be affected. They include:

-  Not wanting to eat or drink.
-  Respiratory signs – coughing, discharge from the eyes and nose, pneumonia.
-  Gastrointestinal signs – vomiting and diarrhoea.
-  Neurological signs – twitching, weakness, seizures.
-  Thickened paw pads.

If your dog has any of the above signs, you should contact the surgery for an appointment straight away. Even if these signs are not caused by Distemper, they will need veterinary attention none the less.

There is no specific treatment for Distemper itself, but with intensive supportive care in hospital, dogs can recover. The earlier this treatment is started the better the chances of recovery.

Sadly, even with aggressive treatment, Distemper can be fatal to your dog so make sure their vaccinations are up to date.

# Leptospirosis.

Leptospirosis is a serious infectious disease that can affect dogs. Fortunately it is largely preventable with regular vaccination, which will stop your dog contracting this potentially fatal disease.

## What is Leptospirosis?

Leptospirosis is caused by infection with Leptospira bacteria. There are several of different types of the bacteria that can cause disease in dogs and, importantly, people can also catch it from animals.

Leptospira bacteria are passed on via urine of infected animals. The bacteria can survive for a long time, especially in stagnant water. Wild animals such as rats can carry and spread the infection to dogs. Dogs become infected by direct contact with infected urine e.g. in stagnant water. The bacteria can penetrate the lining of the mouth, nose and eye or can gain entry to the body through open sores or cuts and scratches.

## How do I prevent my dog catching Leptospirosis?

Vaccinating your dog is very effective at preventing Leptospirosis infection. 2 vaccinations, a minimum of 2 weeks apart, are needed to provide protection against Leptospirosis. These can be started from 8 weeks old.







After the puppy vaccines, a booster vaccination is given at one year old and is needed once a year after this to keep up protection.

Currently we vaccinate against 2 strains of Leptospirosis bacteria.

## What signs does Leptospirosis cause?

Not all dogs infected with Leptospirosis develop serious disease, but the bacteria spread in the blood stream and can concentrate in the liver and kidneys, causing severe damage to these organs.

Signs include:

-  Not wanting to eat or drink.
-  Lethargy.
-  Vomiting.
-  Increased thirst and urinating more often.
-  Jaundice (yellowing of the whites of the eyes and gums).
-  Bleeding.

If your dog has any of the above signs, you should contact the surgery for an appointment straight away. Even if these signs are not caused by Leptospirosis, they will need veterinary attention none the less.

Antibiotics are highly effective at treating Leptospirosis and at clearing the infection, so it can no longer be spread in your dog's urine. However, as the bacteria can cause severe damage to the liver and kidneys, many dogs require intensive hospital treatment and it can be fatal even if appropriate treatment is started.

# Kennel Cough.

Kennel Cough is a term used to describe infectious bronchitis (inflammation of the airways) which can be caused by numerous viruses and bacteria.

## What is Kennel Cough?

Kennel Cough describes the signs seen with infectious bronchitis – a hacking cough is the main symptom. It is usually caused by viral infection spread in the air and is very contagious, like coughs and colds in people. It can also be caused by bacterial infection.

Kennelling dogs is a risk for transmitting Kennel Cough as there are several dogs living in a relatively small area.

## How do I prevent my dog catching Kennel Cough?

There is a vaccination against Kennel Cough, which protects against one of the causes of infection; Bordatella bacteria.

It is given as a separate vaccine from the main vaccination course. Vaccination can be given from 3 weeks of age. It takes 3 days to be effective and protection lasts for a year.

Sadly, it is not possible to protect against all the infectious agents that can cause Kennel Cough symptoms; your dog can still get other respiratory infections even if they have had the Kennel Cough vaccine.

The vaccine is given differently to usual vaccines; the liquid must be squirted up your dog's nose to be effective.

If your dog is going into kennels, always check with the kennel if they require your dog to have Kennel Cough vaccine. Most kennels require the vaccine to be given 3-4 weeks before your dog's stay so make sure you leave plenty of time for your dog to have their vaccine.

## What are the signs of Kennel Cough?

Dogs are usually well when they have Kennel Cough apart from having a harsh cough and sometimes a runny nose and eyes. Some dogs can be more seriously affected and develop signs of pneumonia, but this is uncommon.

Most cases of Kennel Cough will resolve without any specific treatment within 7-10 days, but sometimes anti-inflammatories can help make your dog feel better while recovering from infection.

In some cases, antibiotics are needed, but most infections will quickly resolve without them. There are many reasons why dogs can develop a cough; if your dog has a cough you should contact your nearest surgery for an appointment, especially if they seem unwell.

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