



Kennel Cough Information

<http://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/dog-care/common-dog-diseases>

Kennel cough is a term loosely used to describe a complex of respiratory infections—both viral and bacterial—that causes inflammation of a dog’s voice box and windpipe. It’s a form of bronchitis and is similar to a chest cold in humans.

Though it usually clears up on its own, kennel cough is highly contagious to other dogs.

Symptoms of Kennel Cough

- A persistent dry cough with a “honking” sound.
- In most cases, she’ll appear healthy except for the cough.
- Gagging
- Coughing up white foamy phlegm
- Fever
- Nasal discharge

Causes of Kennel Cough

Dogs can catch kennel cough in several ways:

- Kennel cough can spread through aerosols in the air, directly from dog to dog, or through germs on contaminated objects.
- Kennel cough is often spread in enclosed areas with poor air circulation, like a kennel or an animal shelter.
- Kennel cough can also spread through direct contact like shared water dishes or even greeting another dog.

Most kennels will not board a pet without proof of a recent vaccination against parainfluenza and Bordetella, two of the main causes of kennel cough.

Dogs More Prone to Kennel Cough

- Dogs who have frequent contact with other dogs, especially in enclosed or poorly-ventilated areas, are most prone to becoming infected.
- Young and unvaccinated dogs are also at higher risk.

Kennel Cough Prevention

- The best way to prevent kennel cough is to prevent exposure.



- Vaccinations are also available for several of the agents known to be involved in kennel cough, including parainfluenza, Bordetella and adenovirus-2.
- Ask your vet if these are recommended, and how often.
- Vaccinations aren't useful if a dog has already caught the virus.

Kennel Cough Treatment

See your veterinarian if your dog develops a cough. In some cases, you may be advised to simply let kennel cough run its course and heed the following:

- Dogs with kennel cough should be isolated from other dogs.
- A humidifier, vaporizer or steam from a shower can provide relief for irritated breathing passages.
- Avoid exposing your dog to cigarette smoke or other noxious, irritating fumes.
- A cough suppressant or antimicrobial may be prescribed.
- If your dog pulls against her collar while being walked, replace it with a harness until the coughing subsides.
- Supportive care is very important—be sure your dog is eating, drinking and in a stress-free environment.

Kennel Cough Recovery

- In most cases, the signs of kennel cough gradually decrease and disappear after three weeks.
- Young puppies, elderly dogs and other immunocompromised animals may take up to six weeks or more to recover.
- Animals may remain infectious for long periods of time even after the symptoms have cleared up.

When to Consult Your Veterinarian

- If you suspect your dog has kennel cough, immediately isolate her from all other dogs and call your veterinarian.
- After a dog has been diagnosed, you should see some improvement in your dog's condition within one week of treatment, but be alert to how long the symptoms last.
- If your dog has nasal discharge, is breathing rapidly, refuses to eat or seems lethargic, take her back to the veterinarian right away.
- Serious cases of kennel cough can lead to pneumonia if left untreated.