



Tips to Protect Your Dog from Dog Flu (Canine Influenza)

Between March 16 and April 1, 2015, Canine Influenza Virus (CIV) has been positively diagnosed in 89 dogs in the Chicago area. Canine influenza virus causes a respiratory infection in dogs that is often referred to as canine influenza or “dog flu.” Canine influenza virus was first isolated in Florida in 2004 at a Greyhound racing facility. Since then, the virus has been confirmed in dogs across 40 states and the District of Columbia. Since it is a relatively new virus, almost all dogs are susceptible to infection when they are newly exposed because they have not built up natural immunity.

Most infected dogs show only mild symptoms, but some dogs become very sick and require veterinary treatment. Most common clinical signs include lethargy, anorexia, low-grade fever, nasal discharge, and cough. Dogs with more severe disease can present with a high fever and pneumonia.

What You Need to Know and Do

- CIV is not the same as Bordetella and Bordetella is not the only pathogen that causes kennel cough.
- Canine influenza is highly infectious and the virus spreads very quickly from dog to dog.
- Canine influenza virus can be spread by direct contact with respiratory discharge from infected dogs, through the air via a cough, bark, or sneeze, and by contact with contaminated objects such as dog bowls and clothing.
- To prevent the spread of disease, wash your hands with soap and water or disinfect them with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer after contact with dogs.
- Dog owners whose dogs are coughing or showing other signs of respiratory disease should not participate in activities or bring their dogs to facilities where other dogs can be exposed to the virus.
- Call your veterinarian immediately if your dog has the following symptoms:
 - Coughing
 - Discharge from the nose or eyes
 - Loss of appetite
 - Lethargy/lack of energy
- Canine influenza can be prevented through vaccination. Talk to your veterinarian about whether or not your pet is at risk. Merck Animal Health offers a Canine influenza vaccine which is available through veterinarians.
- More information is available at <http://www.doginfluenza.com/>.