



BRIARPOINTE VETERINARY CLINIC

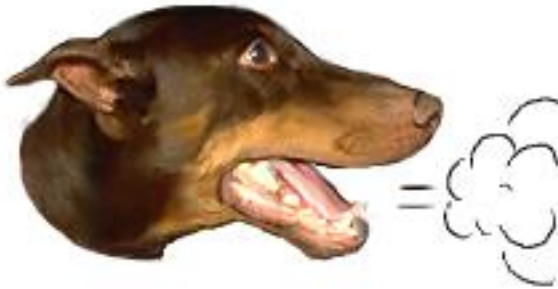
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KENNEL COUGH

What is Kennel Cough?

Kennel Cough is a broad term covering any infectious or contagious condition of dogs where coughing is one of the major clinical signs. The term *tracheobronchitis* describes the location of the infection in the “windpipe” or trachea and bronchial tubes. Several viruses and bacteria can cause kennel cough, often at the same time. These include adenovirus type-2 (distinct from the adenovirus type 1 that causes *infectious hepatitis*), parainfluenza virus, and the bacterium *Bordetella bronchiseptica*. Because the infection spreads when dogs are housed together, it is often seen soon after dogs have been in kennels, hence the name “kennel cough”.



What are the clinical signs of kennel cough other than coughing?

Clinical signs may be variable. It is often a mild disease, but the cough may be chronic, lasting for several weeks in some cases. Common clinical signs include a loud cough often describe as a “goose honk”, runny eyes and nose, swollen tonsils, wheezing, lack of appetite and depressed behavior. Most cases of infectious tracheobronchitis have a demonstrable or elicitable cough that occurs when the throat is rubbed or palpated.

What is the treatment for infectious tracheobronchitis?

There is no specific treatment for the viral infections, but many of the more severe signs are due to bacterial involvement, particularly *Bordetella bronchiseptica*. Antibiotics are useful against this bacterium, although some antibiotic resistance has been reported. Some cases require prolonged treatment, but most infections resolve within one to three weeks. Mild clinical signs may linger even when the bacteria have been eliminated.

How can I prevent my dog contracting Kennel Cough?

We recommend Bordetella vaccination for dogs that are boarded, groomed, bred, interact with other dogs in areas such as dog parks or at training classes.

How effective are these vaccines?

Immunity, even if the dog has experienced a natural infection, is neither solid nor long-lasting. We cannot expect vaccines to do much better. Since immunity varies with the circumstances, Please consult with us regarding specific vaccination recommendations for your pet. Which may vary according to specific circumstances. Some kennel facilities require a booster vaccination shortly before boarding and we recommend a booster vaccine every six months to ensure maximum protection against this troublesome infection.

How are the Bordetella vaccines administered?

Bordetella vaccination is given either by injection or intra-nasal route. Intra-nasal refers to the liquid vaccine administered as nose drops. This allows local immunity to develop on the mucous membranes of the nose, throat and windpipe where the infectious agents first attack.

Edited by John S. Parker, DVM October, 2007
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