

Kennel Cough

The facts

- Kennel cough (infectious tracheobronchitis) is a contagious, upper-respiratory disease.
- It is transmitted by an airborne virus and often complicated by secondary bacterial infection.
- Kennel cough occurs more commonly in puppies and young adult dogs. It is often caught at kennels or shelters where dogs are exposed to many other dogs.
- Because the virus is airborne, normal cleaning and disinfecting of kennel surfaces cannot eliminate it.

Symptoms

Dogs with kennel cough are usually bright and alert and usually eat well; however, they have a dry, hacking cough or bouts of deep, harsh coughing often followed by gagging motions. The gagging sometimes produces foamy mucus. Most dogs with kennel cough do not have a fever.

Solutions

- If your dog has these symptoms, consult your veterinarian for treatment. Antibiotics may be prescribed to prevent or cure a secondary infection.
- Keep dogs in a relatively warm environment and make sure they are rested to help prevent the development of pneumonia.
- Prevent the spread of this disease by keeping your dog away from other dogs.

Important to know

Not every cough is "kennel cough." Some dogs bark almost continuously while in a shelter, which can lead to a sore throat or many other upper-respiratory diseases.

If your dog has a fever, is less active than normal, has a decreased appetite, has discharge from the eyes or nose, has difficulty breathing, or is older than three years, a more serious problem may be present.