

Infectious Bronchitis "Kennel Cough"

Dogs cough for many reasons. Many pets develop a harsh, deep cough after changes in the environment. This may be associated with time away from home, weather changes, boarding, visits to the dog park, or even a visit to the groomer.

When kenneled away from home, dogs do a lot of barking which can cause irritation in the throat making them susceptible to bronchitis. The normal healthy body is very resistant to infection, but changes resulting from any form of stress can lower the body's resistance to disease. There are many causes of bronchitis including allergy, viral infection, bacterial infection, and mechanical irritation. Many viruses and bacteria can be normal inhabitants of the dog's body causing no problem until stress lowers resistance. Other pathogens thrive in high density environments where dogs are housed in close quarters. Fortunately, we have vaccines available for many of the major causes of canine coughing, the so-called "kennel cough".

The distemper vaccine is a core vaccine that dogs should receive regularly. This vaccine provides protection against parainfluenza and distemper which can present as respiratory illnesses with cough as a primary symptom.

Bordetella bronchiseptica is a highly contagious bacterium that is one of the major causes of coughing. Influenza is also a common cause for respiratory illness and coughing. We have highly effective vaccines available for both of these pathogens. Vaccinations against both of these diseases is recommended for all dog and required for all dogs that stay in our facility for any reason.

Vaccination is no guarantee that bronchitis will not develop, as there are many causes, but we can greatly reduce the chance of illness with proper vaccination. Should your dog develop a cough after boarding or a visit to the groomer, please schedule an exam with your veterinarian.