

## **INFECTIOUS TRACHEOBRONCHITIS ("CANINE COUGH")**

### Overview:

Contagious upper respiratory infections in dogs are termed "canine cough". It is primarily a tracheobronchitis (trachea = windpipe; bronchi = small airway branches in the lungs). Causes, transmission and risk factors are quite similar to the human cold/flu. The main difference is that "canine cough" routinely results more in a deep throaty dramatic cough, and less in signs of "head cold", i.e. nasal discharge is uncommon. The cough is often confused by owners as their dog having something stuck in the throat.

### Cause:

"Canine cough" is caused primarily by two agents;

- 1) *Bordetella bronchiseptica* (a bacteria)
- 2) Parainfluenza virus (a virus)

Also note that other viruses and bacteria can cause upper respiratory tract infection in dogs.

### Vaccination:

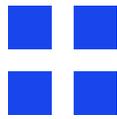
In Australia, routine vaccination in dogs can include;

- |                  |   |    |   |    |   |    |
|------------------|---|----|---|----|---|----|
| a) Parvovirus    | } | C3 | } | C4 | } | C5 |
| b) Distemper     |   |    |   |    |   |    |
| c) Hepatitis     |   |    |   |    |   |    |
| d) Parainfluenza |   |    |   |    |   |    |
| e) Bordatella    |   |    |   |    |   |    |

At South Melbourne Vet Clinic, we routinely recommend and perform vaccination with C5 vaccine. This allows dog owners open access to grooming parlours, boarding kennels, doggy day cares, obedience training and travel. Most of these pet services REQUIRE C5 vaccination to be current, prior to accepting your dog. All areas of the dog industry are now accepting and enforcing full vaccination to protect you, your pet, other people's pets, and the dog population in general, from contagious vaccinatable diseases to the best extent possible.

### Risk Factors:

Anywhere dogs are congregated potentially increases the risk of transmission of "canine cough". Individual dog risk is increased by a compromised immune system caused by a concurrent disease, chemotherapy, some drugs or stress. Cold, damp, wet, draughty housing or living conditions also predispose.



### **Transmission:**

Transmission is usually by direct contact between dogs (saliva) or via aerosol droplet spread. Transmission via human hands or clothes is also possible.

### **Treatment:**

Treatment will usually include antibiotic coverage to prevent bronchitis or pneumonia, and possibly doggy cough medicine. Nursing care includes keeping your dog warm, and keeping exercise minimal until after full recovery.

Please note any viral component will not be 'resolved' immediately because of treatment. The virus will need to run its course until the dogs' body can overcome it. This may mean a cough lasting anywhere from 3-4 days to 2-3 weeks.

### **Prevention:**

Full (C5) vaccination is recommended for all dogs.

### **The Pet Hotel:**

The Pet Hotel is a local "five star" boarding establishment. While the risk of your dog contracting a cough while boarding is inherently increased due to the congregation of dogs, and possible stress associated with being in a new environment, the Pet Hotel take the following steps to reduce the risk of the spread of "canine cough".

1. All dogs require current C5 vaccination prior to entry
2. Use of veterinary grade disinfectants
3. Minimise cross contamination via staff through hygienic dog handling practices
4. Vigilantly monitor all individual dogs
5. Provide prompt treatment as required

Despite everyone's best efforts, and because of the reasons outlined above, occasional outbreaks of "canine cough" will occur. Should your dog contract a cough, please seek veterinary advice/treatment.