

Parvovirus

What is parvovirus?

Parvovirus is caused by a virus that affects the small intestine and occasionally the heart in young puppies. The Parvovirus causes the lining of the intestines to slough, resulting in vomiting and bloody diarrhea. Dogs often are dumpy or tired. Parvovirus can be deadly to unprotected puppies and adult dogs.



How is parvovirus transmitted?

Parvovirus is transmitted through feces of an infected dog and is stable in the environment for months to years. Dogs get parvovirus by ingesting the feces of an infected dog. An infected dog can shed the virus before and after they show signs of being ill.

How do we diagnose parvovirus?

Parvovirus is diagnosed with a complete history, physical exam, and parvovirus diagnostic snap test. The diagnostic parvovirus snap test is done while you wait so that treatment for your pet can be implemented as soon as possible.

How do we treat parvovirus?

Parvovirus is a virus so there is no specific medication that can be given to get rid of it. The problems (dehydration, secondary bacterial infections, nausea, protein loss, electrolyte imbalances, etc) caused by the virus are treated allowing the body a better opportunity to heal. Treatment for parvovirus includes hospitalization and supportive care with IV fluids, antibiotics, anti-nausea medications and so much more. With supportive care most dogs will show improvement in 3-5 days of hospitalization.

Is parvovirus preventable?

YES! Parvovirus is easily preventable when your dog is appropriately vaccinated. We recommend all dogs be vaccinated once a month for three months starting at 8 weeks of age, and then once yearly after that. Until your puppy or adult dog receives their entire series of vaccines, precaution should be taken not to expose them to unvaccinated dogs or to areas where unvaccinated pets have been (pet stores, parks, rest areas). Parvovirus is highly contagious.