

# What I need to know about CANINE INFLUENZA



## Canine influenza is...

**a newly emerging and highly contagious disease** caused by a strain of the influenza A virus known as H3N8. Because canine influenza is caused by a new virus, dogs have no natural immunity to it. Virtually every dog exposed to the virus for the first time will become infected. This particular strain of influenza A only affects dogs, and does not cause disease in people.

**spread the same way human influenza is spread**—through direct contact (licking and nuzzling); through the air (coughing or sneezing); and via contaminated surfaces (such as a person's hands or clothing).

**characterized by a persistent cough** that may last for several weeks. Other signs of infection include fever, runny nose, and lack of energy or appetite.

**sometimes quite serious** and can be deadly. In about 20% of cases, more severe signs will occur such as high fever and pneumonia. A small number of dogs infected with the virus have died from complications associated with the disease.

**hard to diagnose** because the signs of canine influenza are so similar to those caused by other respiratory infections. Often the disease is not suspected until the illness becomes unusually severe or lasts an unusually long time.

**a greater risk for dogs in multiple-dog environments.** Because canine influenza is easily spread between dogs, places where dogs congregate may pose a higher risk of infection. Some of these venues include shelters, clinics, boarding facilities, breeding kennels, pet stores, doggie daycares, dog kindergartens, groomers, dog parks, and dog events.



# How I can protect my dog from CANINE INFLUENZA

There is currently no specific treatment for canine influenza. As with all viral illnesses, the disease must run its course. At this time, the best way to keep your dog safe from canine influenza is through preventive measures.

## Prevention is the best medicine against canine influenza.

**Keep your dog healthy.** Protection starts by keeping your dog in good general health. A well-nourished, well-rested, and well-cared-for pet will have a stronger immune system to help fight off infection.

**Get your dog vaccinated.** Recently, a new canine influenza vaccine—the first of its kind—was approved for use in the US. Canine Influenza Vaccine, H3N8 from Intervet/Schering-Plough Animal Health has been clinically proven to significantly reduce the severity of influenza and the length of time that a dog is sick.

The initial vaccination requires 2 doses, 2 to 4 weeks apart, followed by annual revaccination. If your dog is presently being vaccinated for canine cough (*Bordetella*), he or she is a likely candidate for Canine Influenza Vaccine, H3N8.

**Talk to your veterinarian.** Your veterinarian is the best source of information regarding the health of your pet. Schedule an appointment to talk with your veterinarian about canine influenza, your dog's risk of catching the disease, the new canine influenza vaccine, and whether it should be added to your dog's vaccination schedule.



Visit [www.doginfluenza.com](http://www.doginfluenza.com)  
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