



Common Canine Diseases

Heartworm

Symptoms

- Coughing
- Fatigue
- Tiring easily after exercise
- Congestive heart failure
- Sudden death
- Enlarged abdomen

What is it?

Heartworm disease poses a serious health risk to dogs and is very prevalent in the United States. Heartworms are transmitted to dogs by mosquitoes. Once infected, heartworm larvae are carried in the bloodstream until they reach the right ventricle of the heart where they then mature. Heartworms, and the effects of the disease, cause serious harm to your dog's vital organs. Without treatment, heartworm disease is fatal.

What You Should Do

Wayside Waifs recommends that all dogs be on heartworm preventative all year round, even dogs who primarily live indoors. Heartworm disease is inexpensive to prevent, but very costly to treat. Left untreated, heartworm disease is fatal. A simple blood test will determine if your dog has heartworms. A negative heartworm test is required before starting your dog on heartworm prevention. It is recommended that all dogs be tested annually for heartworms.

Upper Respiratory Infection (URI or Kennel Cough)

Symptoms

- Coughing
- Sneezing
- Runny eyes
- Runny nose
- Possible blood or mucous in diarrhea

What is it?

URI is common in a shelter environment and can come on suddenly. The incubation period once a dog is exposed to the virus to when symptoms are most commonly noticed is 5-14 days. URI is contagious to other dogs and generally lasts 7-14 days. Dogs may require an antibiotic to help treat any secondary, bacterial infection. Ninety percent of canine upper respiratory infections are viral, caused most commonly by bordetella.

What You Should Do

Contact the vet clinic to schedule an appointment if you suspect your dog may have URI. Antibiotics can be given if a bacterial infection is present, but if it is viral, then the virus must run its course. Treatment/recovery averages 7-14 days.



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Parvo

Symptoms

- Diarrhea (with or without blood present)
- Vomiting
- Lethargy
- Loss of appetite

What is it?

Parvovirus is highly contagious, incredibly durable in the environment, and capable of producing severe or life-threatening disease in dogs. Parvo is shed in the fecal matter and be transferred on contaminated items such as clothing, toys, etc.

What You Should Do

Due to the highly contagious nature and the rapid spread of this virus to other dogs, Wayside Waifs cannot treat parvo. If you suspect your dog may have parvo, contact your veterinarian immediately. It is critical that treatment for this virus begin as soon as possible to ensure the best chance of recovery and survival.

Urinary Tract Infection (UTI)

Symptoms

- Bloody urine
- Fatigue and lethargy
- Fever
- Foul smelling urine
- Straining when urinating
- Frequent urination attempts
- Tender lower stomach area
- Urinating in inappropriate places

What is it?

Urinary tract infections arise when too many bacteria get into the urinary tract of a dog. This is seen more often in female dogs than male dogs because they have a shorter urethra and thus bacteria can accumulate here more rapidly.

What You Should Do

Collect a urine sample to be analyzed by a veterinarian. If the urine tests positive for bacteria or for blood, a course of antibiotic treatment will be prescribed to help the infection resolve. Treatment can last up to 10 days and may require additional medications if the first round of medicine does not eliminate all of the bacteria.



Common Canine Diseases

Coccidia

Symptoms

- Diarrhea
- Possible blood or mucous in diarrhea
- Dehydration

What is it?

Coccidia is an intestinal organism. It is most commonly seen in puppies and immune-compromised dogs. Most commonly puppies get the organism from being around a dog (their mother) that is shedding the disease through her feces. Coccidia is very contagious, especially among young puppies and has a very strong, recognizable odor.

What You Should Do

You will need to collect a stool sample to be analyzed by a veterinarian. Medication can inhibit the reproduction of the organism, allowing the puppy to increase their immunity and remove the organism. Treatment averages 7-21 days.

Ringworm

Symptoms

- Circular patches of hair loss
- Patches may be red
- Scratching may occur

What is it?

Ringworm is a fungal infection affecting the skin, hair and occasionally nails of animals (and people). Three species of ringworm fungus most commonly affect cats and dogs. It can live in carriers, furniture, carpets, dust, heating vents, furnace filters, etc. It is highly contagious to other pets and humans in the household.