



HILLSIDE VETERINARY HOSPITAL

1700 Kings Road

Victoria, B.C. V8R 2P1

Phone (250) 598-4477

Dr J. Chan, Dr G. Newman, Dr S. Abrioux & Associates

www.hillsidevethospital.com

Canine Kennel Cough

Kennel Cough – In Victoria?

Yes, we typically see one or two outbreaks of Kennel Cough per year in Victoria.

What is Kennel Cough?

Kennel Cough, or Infectious Tracheobronchitis, is a contagious infection of the canine upper respiratory system (notably the windpipe and bronchial tubes), most commonly manifesting as a persistent, dry cough.

How is it caused?

Kennel Cough can be caused by a number of bacteria and viruses but most commonly adenovirus-type 2, parainfluenza virus, and the bacterium *Bordetella bronchiseptica*. These infectious organisms are transmitted through the air, infecting other dogs by direct inhalation or through contact with a contaminated surface. Dogs in close quarters, such as kennels, shelters, and groomers are thus particularly susceptible to infection. Dogs with depressed immune function due to illness or stress, or puppies with developing immune systems are also at greater risk of infection.

What are the symptoms?

Aside from coughing, the clinical signs of Kennel Cough are variable. These may include runny nose and eyes, sneezing, fever, swollen tonsils, wheezing respiration, lack of appetite and depressed behaviour. Your veterinarian will diagnose Kennel Cough by the appearance of these symptoms along with recent potential exposure to the disease.

What is the treatment?

Involved bacteria, such as *Bordetella*, can be treated successfully with the use of antibiotics, with the majority of infections resolving within 1 - 3 weeks. A cough suppressant may also be prescribed. There is no specific treatment for the viral infection.

Can Kennel Cough be prevented?

Vaccinations are available that significantly reduce the chance of infection, and are highly recommended. These contain adenovirus, parainfluenza, and *Bordetella*. It is also essential that cages are properly disinfected in situations where dogs are housed in close confinement.

How effective are the vaccines for Kennel Cough?

Vaccination significantly reduces the chance that a dog will contract Kennel Cough. Booster vaccines are recommended yearly in healthy dogs. For younger or immune-depressed animals a 6 month booster may be prescribed. *Bordetella* vaccination is administered either intranasally (nose drops) at 3 weeks or older, or by injection at 8 weeks or older. Your veterinarian will suggest which option is the most appropriate for your dog.