

CANINE LEPTOSPIROSIS

FAQ'S FOR DOG OWNERS

WHAT IS LEPTOSPIROSIS?

Leptospirosis is a bacterial disease that can affect people and animals, including pets.

WHERE IS LEPTOSPIROSIS FOUND?

Leptospirosis can be found across the United States, though some regions may be more susceptible than others. The bacteria thrive in warm and wet environments, especially during late summer and into fall, and they can survive for weeks to months. Periods of heavy rainfall can make it easier to spread.

HOW DO DOGS GET LEPTOSPIROSIS?

The bacteria that cause leptospirosis are spread through urine of infected animals and can survive in water or soil for weeks to months. People and animals can get infected through contact with contaminated urine, water or soil.

The bacteria can enter the body through skin or mucus membranes (eyes, nose or mouth), especially if the skin is broken from a cut or scratch. Dogs usually become infected by drinking, swimming or walking through contaminated water.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF LEPTOSPIROSIS, AND HOW LONG DO THEY LAST?

Dogs usually get sick one to two weeks after exposure. Illness can last days or weeks and may include fever, chills, vomiting, muscle aches or diarrhea. Some dogs may seem to recover after the initial illness, but later develop more severe symptoms. This second phase of the disease may include kidney failure or liver failure.

A veterinarian will diagnose leptospirosis based on history of exposure, symptoms and a blood test and / or urine test.



CAN LEPTOSPIROSIS BE TREATED?

Yes, leptospirosis is treated with antibiotics. Treating the disease early can help prevent severe symptoms. Hospitalization may be necessary for dogs with severe cases.

HOW CAN I PROTECT MY DOG FROM LEPTOSPIROSIS?

Keep your home free of rodents and prevent your dog from having direct contact with rodents and small mammals when outdoors. Do not let your pet drink from puddles or other sources of water that may be contaminated with animal urine. Have your dog vaccinated against leptospirosis.

IF MY DOG ALREADY HAD LEPTOSPIROSIS, CAN NIT GET INFECTED AGAIN?

Yes. Many different types of the bacteria exists. After recovery from leptospirosis, an animal will only be immune to the strain in the original infection.

CAN I GET LEPTOSPIROSIS FROM MY DOG?

Although possible, this is extremely rare.

HOW LONG IS IT TRANSMITTABLE?

After starting treatment, dogs may continue to pass leptospirosis for six weeks.