

KENNEL COUGH



What is kennel cough?

Kennel cough is the common name given to infectious bronchitis in dogs. Just like human chest infections, a number of different bacteria and viruses can cause the illness. It is normally a combination of both and it affects the respiratory system, causing dogs to cough.

Can any dog catch kennel cough?

Yes – no breed is immune to it

What does kennel cough sound like?

The most obvious symptom is a forceful, hacking cough. It often sounds like your dog has something stuck in their throat. The cough can be dry and hoarse or productive, in which case it can be followed by a gag, swallowing motion or the production of mucus. It differs from the cough-like sound known as reverse sneezing, (common in certain breeds) and is triggered by a throat irritation.

Your pet can be vaccinated
against this disease.

Call 0207 387 8134

Are there other symptoms of kennel cough besides the cough itself?

- In many cases, dogs with kennel cough will appear healthy apart from coughing. But some dogs will have a runny nose, sneezing or eye discharge. They should retain their appetite

Is kennel cough dangerous or life-threatening?

- Although it is a nuisance, kennel cough is not normally dangerous and is likely to need no treatment at all. In puppies, elderly dogs or those with existing illnesses, however, the condition can be more serious and can develop into pneumonia.
- Depending on the germs which have caused the virus, some strains of the infection can also be more severe than others.

How can dogs catch kennel cough?

- Kennel cough is airborne and highly contagious, which is why it can spread through kennels quickly. It is also transmitted via shared objects such as food bowls or water bowls or toys
- A dog's respiratory system is designed to protect against the invasion of infection, but certain situations and environments leave them more vulnerable to illness. These include stress caused by crowded environments, exposure to heavy dust or cigarette smoke, cold temperatures and poor ventilation. Kennel cough has an incubation period of two to 14 days, and some dogs can be carriers of the infection for months without developing symptoms.

How is kennel cough diagnosed?

- There is no single test to diagnose kennel cough. Usually, if your dog has symptoms and has been exposed to a crowd of other canines within the incubation period, a kennel cough diagnosis is likely. Swabs may be used to determine the exact virus or bacteria – although this isn't always useful for treatment. If there are suspected complications, radiographs can be used to assess a dog's condition.

- If your dog is bright, perky, eating well and playful, you may not need to visit the vet.
- Please phone your vet for advice if you are worried. Advise staff that your dog has been coughing – as we may recommend that they wait somewhere other than the waiting room.

Can kennel cough be treated?

- In most cases, dogs will recover from kennel cough without treatment within three weeks. It can linger for anything up to six weeks. To assist recovery, ensure your home is well ventilated. Avoid using a collar and lead as any pulling might aggravate the dog's wind pipe further. (Using a harness is better during recovery) Antibiotics can kill the *Bordetella* bacteria – the most common present in kennel cough cases. Cough suppressants and anti-inflammatories may also be given by your vet. These can reduce symptoms if excessive such as persistent coughing.

Can my dog be infected more than once?

- Yes. There are many different strains of kennel cough so your dog can catch the infection multiple times. If your dog has contracted the *Bordetella bronchiseptica* strain, he or she will typically be immune to reinfection for six to 12 months

How can I vaccinate my dog against kennel cough?

Some of the infections that can cause kennel cough are included in the basic vaccinations dogs need to have as a puppy, and subsequent boosters. These are canine adenovirus type two, canine parainfluenza virus, canine distemper, and canine influenza.

The most common bacteria present in kennel cough is *Bordetella bronchiseptica*, which can be given as a separate vaccine. However, as there are many strains of the infection, it cannot guarantee protection – but at the very least should lessen symptoms. Vaccination is not useful in dogs already incubating kennel cough.

The nasal vaccine for *Bordetella bronchiseptica* can be given when your dog is as young as three weeks, with it providing protection for about 12 months.



How long does the kennel cough vaccine take to become effective?

It takes four days for it to become effective, and is considered the fastest method of providing immunity

How long does a kennel cough vaccine last?

The kennel cough vaccination is designed to last about 12 months.

Prices from £19.45 when vaccine is given as part of a wider consultation.
Stand-alone treatment from £33.15

KENNEL COUGH - KEY FACTS

- Kennel cough is a respiratory infection caused a number of bacteria and viruses
- Puppies, elderly dogs and those with existing medical conditions can be susceptible to complications from kennel cough, such as pneumonia
- It is not usually dangerous and normally clears up without treatment within a few weeks
- Apart from the coughing, the infection is unlikely to make your dog feel ill
- Kennel cough has an incubation period of two to 14 days
- A kennel cough vaccine is available and is often required for a stay in kennels where the highly contagious infection can spread easily