

CANINE PARVOVIRUS

FAST FIVE

Canine parvovirus, or “parvo”, is a highly contagious viral illness that can be particularly harmful to puppies. Read the Fast Five on this disease to protect your pet.

WHO IS AT RISK?

Although any unvaccinated dog may become ill due to parvovirus, **young puppies between weaning and 6 months of age** are most at risk.

WHERE DOES IT COME FROM?

The virus is shed in the **feces of infected pet dogs, feral canines and wildlife**. It can live in environments like soil and grass for more than a year, even after the feces has been cleaned up. Susceptible dogs become infected in the normal course of exploring their world. Animals usually start to show signs of illness 4-7 days after encountering the virus.

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

The symptoms of parvovirus infection include **appetite loss, fever, lethargy, vomiting, diarrhea (with or without blood), immune suppression and even heart inflammation**. Many infected dogs die without treatment.

HOW IS IT TREATED?

Infected puppies usually need to be hospitalized for at least part of their treatment. Treatment includes **hydration (IV fluids), nausea control, pain control, antibiotics, nutritional therapy and supportive care**.

WHEN TO ACT

Puppies are best protected from parvovirus by vaccinating them every 3-4 weeks through the weaning period – from about six weeks to four months of age. Puppies aren't fully protected until after their last vaccine, so visits to contaminated areas like dog parks should be avoided. **If your puppy shows signs of vomiting, lethargy, appetite loss or diarrhea before their vaccine series is complete**, have them examined promptly by your veterinarian.

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