Canine Influenza Virus (CIV)

The dog flu or canine influenza is caused by the canine influenza virus. It  is highly contagious and easily spread from infected dogs to other dogs through direct contact, nasal secretions (through coughing and sneezing), contaminated objects (kennel surfaces, food and water bowls, collars and leashes), and by people moving between infected and uninfected dogs. Dogs of any breed, age, sex or health status are at risk of infection when exposed to the virus but it is not contagious to people.

The illness may be mild or severe, and infected dogs develop a **persistent cough** and may develop a **thick nasal discharge** and **fever**. Other signs can **include lethargy, eye discharge, reduced appetite, and low-grade fever**. Most dogs recover within 2-3 weeks. However, secondary bacterial infections can develop, and may cause more severe illness and pneumonia. Anyone with concerns about their pet’s health, or whose pet is showing signs of canine influenza, should contact their veterinarian.

CIV can be diagnosed early in the illness (less than 4 days) by testing a nasal or throat swab. The most accurate test for CIV infection is a blood test that requires a sample taken during the first week of illness, followed by a second sample 10-14 days later.

Info taken from <https://www.avma.org/public/PetCare/Pages/CanineInfluenza.aspx>

The influenza vaccine on the market today is for a different strain (H3N8) than what is cropping up now but Merk, the vaccine manufacturers, believe that it will at least reduce the severity of the current flu strain (H3N2). The company has made a guarantee that if a dog has been vaccinated with both the Bordetella vaccine and the canine influenza vaccine, all testing will be covered free of charge and if it is influenza, regardless of strain, Merk will cover up to $5,000 of treatment. Kennel cough (Bordetella), Parainfluenza, and Canine influenza all have similar symptoms so it may be difficult to tell if your dog actually has influenza without doing testing.

Most household cleaners work to disinfect surfaces but there is a possibility that it can become aerosolized. The biggest thing is just limiting contact with sick dogs.

Recommendations

* LEAVE SICK PETS AT HOME and consider leaving all dogs at home if a pet is showing signs since the other pets and the owner can spread it.
* If your dog starts showing signs while at the tournament, please let a Go Dog Go member know and isolate your dog from the competition area or from any area where other dogs will go. It may be best to leave the facilities completely so that it reduces spread to other dogs.
* If you can, get your dog vaccinated with the canine influenza vaccine and Bordetella if you don’t already.