

Canine Parvovirus

Canine Parvovirus (CPV) is a highly contagious virus with a mortality rate of almost 100%. It is more severe in puppies less than 5 months old that have not been vaccinated or have not received the protective antibodies from their vaccinated mother.

CPV is carried to the intestine where it invades the intestinal wall causing inflammation.

CPV is resistant to the effects of heat, detergents and alcohol which means that it is extremely stable in the environment unlike most other viruses. CPV can be detected in dog faeces after a period of 3 months when the faeces is kept at room temperature. Due to its stability, the virus is easily transmitted via the hair or feet of infected dogs, contaminated shoes, clothes and other objects. Direct contact between dogs is not required to spread the virus.

Dogs that become infected with the virus and show clinical signs will usually become ill within 7-10 days of the initial infection.

Clinical signs of CPV vary but generally include severe vomiting and diarrhoea (with or without blood). Dogs that are infected with CPV may also show signs of depression, lack of appetite and fever.

How is it diagnosed and treated?

CPV is confirmed with a simple test that requires either a faecal sample or blood serum.

As with any viral disease there is no treatment to kill the virus once it infects the dog. The first step in treatment is to correct dehydration and electrolyte imbalances via an intravenous fluid drip containing electrolytes as well as antibiotics, anti-inflammatory drugs and supportive therapy are also given.

Can CPV be prevented?

The best method to protect your dog against CPV infection is by vaccination. Puppies should receive a series of 3 vaccinations from 6-8 weeks of age, then at 12-14 weeks of age and the 3rd at 16-18 weeks of age with yearly vaccination boosters to follow for the rest of the dog's life.

For more information please contact reception.