



Canine Influenza Virus, H3N8 (Dog Flu)



If you're a dog owner, chances are you've heard of Canine Influenza Virus (CIV) or dog flu. CIV is a highly contagious respiratory infection caused by a virus that affects dogs of all ages and breeds. As your pets' healthcare team, we would like to address the associated potential risks, symptoms and treatment options regarding this very real health concern.

What is Canine Influenza Virus?

Experts have traced CIV from a virus mutation caused by equine influenza in horses. The first case is said to have originated in a Florida greyhound racetrack in 2004, which quickly spread across the country. Since, thirty states have documented cases, while the most prevalent are Colorado, Florida, New York and Pennsylvania. We know for sure that CIV strictly affects dogs, with zero evidence showing that cats, birds or humans can contract it.

What are the symptoms?

About 80% of affected dogs will experience an acute respiratory infection accompanied by coughing, sneezing, runny nose (nasal discharge), loss of appetite and even fever, while approximately 20% will remain symptom-less. Unfortunately, there are no clinical signs that can differentiate canine influenza from other respiratory infections, such as Bordetella or Kennel Cough. Therefore, an examination, along with diagnostic tests, must be performed in order to make a final diagnosis. While most affected dogs recover in about two weeks without any additional health issues, others can develop pneumonia, which can be life threatening and require monitored hospitalization.

How does the virus spread?

Virtually all dogs exposed to CIV in any type of animal facility or gathering spot can quickly become infected. The virus can live on floors, toys, food and water bowls, collars, leashes and even on human hands and clothing. It can also be passed by way of a cough or sneeze.

Can it be treated?

If your dog shows flu-like symptoms, please bring them in to see your vet as soon as possible. Supportive care and treatment with antibiotics are often necessary to help your pet to recover from the flu and to avoid secondary infections like pneumonia and bronchitis.

Can it be prevented?

In 2009, the U.S. Department of Agriculture approved the first-ever influenza vaccine for dogs, which is stocked at West Chelsea Vet. We believe the vaccine may be indicated for very high risk dogs; particularly brachycephalic breeds who are more susceptible to airway disease. Other dogs considered to be at risk include those that frequent dog runs, kennels or doggie day care and thus have a higher likelihood of being exposed.

The vaccine is administered in a series of 2 doses 2-3 weeks apart the first time it is given. After the initial immunity is set up, the vaccine is given annually to booster protection. If your dogs falls into one of these high risk categories, and you need help deciding whether the canine flu vaccine is warranted, our vets can help determine if your pet is an appropriate candidate.



PREVENTING CANINE FLU

Effectively washing potentially contaminated items can kill CIV bacteria. As a rule of thumb, dogs that are coughing or showing other signs of respiratory disease should not participate in activities or be brought where other dogs can be exposed.

If you suspect your dog may have contracted CIV or is showing symptoms, please call us right away at (212) 645-2767. For more information, visit www.doginfluenza.com

NEWS + EVENTS



Funnier & More Giving Than Ever

On May 24th, 2010, the 4th annual "Funny for Fido" charity event brought together some of the country's top comics, like Colin Quinn, Dave Attel and Pete Correale, for an evening of laughs to raise money for New York City's homeless pets. It was the most successful and well attended yet. West Chelsea Vet is proud to be an official sponsor. Visit www.funnyforfido.org for more information.



Facebook. We've Joined the Craze, Now We're Recruiting Your Pets!



We hope you'll become an official fan of West Chelsea Vet on Facebook, where you'll find pet articles, ongoing promotions and more. In June, we're kicking off our "Pet of the Week" contest! Enter your pets today by emailing us at WCV_Pet_of_The_Week@Gmail.com. Please include your pet's name, favorite picture and a funny tidbit about them. See you online!

Welcome Our Newest Vet!

We're pleased to announce the newest addition to our veterinary team. She's New York native Jaclyn Homan, D.V.M., who completed her undergrad degree at Loyola College in Maryland and her veterinary degree from Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine in 2009. Before joining West Chelsea Vet, she worked at a large, 24-hour veterinary emergency hospital in Valley Stream, New York. Her medical interests include small animal medicine, radiology and, above all, patient care. She loves to travel, spend time with family and friends and time outdoors with her black lab mix, Jake. To read her online bio, visit:



Jaclyn Homan, D.V.M.

www.westchelseavet.com/meetourvets.html

