



## KENNEL COUGH

Kennel cough (Infectious tracheobronchitis) is a contagious upper-respiratory disease. It is caused by airborne viruses and/or bacteria. It occurs more commonly in puppies and young adult dogs. It is often caught at kennels or shelters where dogs are exposed to many other dogs. Because the pathogens are airborne, normal cleaning and disinfecting of kennel surfaces cannot eliminate it.

Dogs with kennel cough are usually bright and alert, and are usually eating well. They have a dry, hacking cough or bouts of deep, harsh coughing often followed by gagging motions. The gagging sometimes produces foamy mucus. When external pressure is applied to the trachea or larynx, coughing is usually easily produced. Most dogs with kennel cough do not have a fever. Coughing can last 2-3 weeks.

If your dog has these symptoms, consult your veterinarian or the shelter for treatment. Antibiotics are typically prescribed to treat the bacterial component of kennel cough.

To help prevent the development of pneumonia, dogs with kennel cough should be rested and kept in a relatively warm environment. They should be kept off leash as much as possible (pulling on the leash causes more coughing.) They should be kept away from other dogs to prevent exposing them to this very contagious disease. Don't assume that any cough is "kennel cough." Most dogs bark almost continuously while sheltered, which can lead to a sore throat or many other upper-respiratory diseases. If there is fever, if your dog is less active than normal, has a decreased appetite, has discharge from the eyes or nose, or has difficulty breathing, or if your dog is older than three years, a more serious problem may be present.