

## **Kennel Cough (or Canine Infectious Bronchitis)**

### **What is kennel cough?**

Kennel cough is an infectious condition affecting dogs causing a harsh cough. Many cases are not serious, but are a nuisance for a few days, often resolving without treatment. As with the common cold in people, a few patients may cough day and night or take much longer for the cough to subside and they may require treatment with antibiotics.

### **How is kennel cough spread?**

Kennel cough is highly contagious and spreads easily through airborne/droplet infection anywhere that dogs are in close proximity to each other (across garden fences, in parks, boarding kennels, vet's waiting rooms and dog play areas). If your dog gets kennel cough, any other dogs you have are likely to get infected too.

### **What causes kennel cough and can you protect against it?**

Kennel cough is caused by viruses and bacteria acting together. No vaccine can offer complete protection (the viruses and bacteria can be different from one case to another) but vaccines are available to protect against the most commonly involved virus (Canine parainfluenza virus) and the most commonly involved bacteria (*Bordetella bronchiseptica*). Many dogs may have some protection from kennel cough from parainfluenza virus from the routine vaccines that your vet will review annually. Vaccines against *Bordetella* are also available and are given as drops up the nose or orally into the mouth. Most boarding kennels require *Bordetella* vaccination.

### **What are the side effects of vaccination?**

Some dogs have mild symptoms of coughing, sneezing or discharge from the eyes or nose for a few days following the vaccine. Occasionally they persist for longer. Other side effects are likely to be extremely rare. We recommend avoiding strenuous exercise for 7 days after the vaccination.

### **Your dog should not receive *Bordetella* vaccination if it:**

- is already receiving antibiotics (the vaccine is unlikely to do harm, but probably won't work)
- is already coughing or has a known respiratory condition
- has a known problem with the immune system, this is strongly suspected by your vet or it is receiving drugs to suppress the immune system
- has previously had serious adverse reactions to vaccines
- has received a vaccine made by a different drug company within the previous 2 weeks