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Rise in Parvovirus Cases in Dogs

Adams County Health and Human Services has received reports from local veterinarians that there has been a recent increase in parvovirus in dogs. Canine parvovirus is an extremely contagious virus that causes serious symptoms in puppies, dogs, and wild canids such as foxes and coyotes. Symptoms include: tiredness, loss of appetite, fever, vomiting, severe diarrhea and death. Vomiting and diarrhea cause rapid dehydration and most deaths occur within 48 to 72 hours after symptoms begin. If your puppy or dog shows any of these signs you should contact your veterinarian immediately. Treatment needs to be started right away. There is no medication that will kill the virus. Treatment consists of making sure the animal does not become dehydrated, controlling of the vomiting and diarrhea, and preventing additional infections. Sick dogs must be kept away from other animals in order to prevent the spread of the virus. A dog that has recovered from parvovirus can continue to spread the virus for 3-6 weeks.

Parvovirus is very contagious and is spread by direct dog-to-dog contact, by contact with contaminated poop, through the environment or by people. The virus can live on kennel surfaces, in food and water bowls, collars, leashes, and on the hands and clothing of people who have handled infected dogs. The virus is resistant to heat, cold, humidity, and drying. The virus can survive for long periods of time if the conditions are right. It takes just small amounts of the virus to transfer the virus on feet of dogs, shoes, contaminated cages, or other objects. In order to prevent the spread of the virus you must disinfect

everything that the dog has come in contact with. The only cleaner that will kill the virus is bleach. You must dilute the bleach solution in a 1:10 ratio to kill the virus. Canine Parvovirus will not infect humans but humans can spread it from animal to animal through dirty hands and clothing.

The best way to prevent the spread of the virus is to make sure puppies receive their complete parvovirus vaccine series and all dogs must be kept up-to-date on their parvovirus vaccine. Even with proper vaccination some dogs may still get the virus. Be sure to not allow your puppy or dog to come in contact with other dogs poop while walking or playing. Be sure to clean up after your dog if they poop in a public place or yard. Sunlight will help to kill the virus in small amounts left on grassy areas but always clean up after your dog. If you have questions about parvovirus contact your local veterinarian.

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