

"Did my dog just cough?"

By Nancy Secrist, Easdale: the best pet care

"Did my dog just cough?" <cough> "Oh, no--what should we do?" <cough, cough>

Canine Cough, or Bordetella, is more often seen during the warmer months, especially among senior dogs and puppies. Dogs can contract highly contagious canine cough from drinking out of a shared water bowl or just breathing near a carrier who may have no symptoms or be actively coughing. They can catch it anywhere they meet other dogs such as dog parks, pet supply stores, vets' offices, grooming shops or boarding places.

Canine Cough is similar to the common cold in humans. This upper respiratory infection is caused by both virus and bacterial infections. The trachea and bronchi become inflamed, causing a stuffed-up and coughing pet who can be either mildly or more severely affected. Symptoms include a persistent cough, lack of appetite, mucus discharge from nose or mouth, fever and even an eye discharge. Short nosed breeds such as Bulldogs, Boston Terriers, or Pugs, are affected more severely. If your pooch is showing signs of an upper respiratory infection, it is always best to bring them to the vet and to avoid meeting other dogs for two weeks after the symptoms are gone to avoid spreading it.

Control of canine cough is impossible because the infection can go undetected for days while the dog is still spreading the disease as a silent carrier. It also mutates constantly, and just like human flu vaccines, means that each year's vaccinations might not cover all the new strains that have recently developed. Vaccines do not cover against all of the other infectious agents that are known to cause or contribute to canine cough. However, having your dog's canine cough vaccinations up to date is important because it will protect your dog against the most common strains out there and potentially giving them partial protection against some newly mutated strains.

At Easdale, we want to keep your dog healthy, well socialized and entertained. In most cases, canine cough is not worse than the average cold for humans and not a reason to isolate your dog

from its playmates and fun times in dog parks and pet supply stores. We recommend Bordetella vaccination and as necessary, appropriate medical attention, but in the long run, a well socialized dog that contracts the occasional canine cough is better than a dog being kept away from its own kind. Fun times keep us all healthy and happy!

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