

Infectious Tracheobronchitis in Dogs (Kennel Cough)

General Information

Infectious tracheobronchitis is a contagious disease of the upper respiratory tract, which includes the trachea (windpipe) and bronchi (large air passages of the lungs). Viruses and bacteria are usually involved.

The most common sign of kennel cough is harsh, dry cough that is often followed by gagging and coughing up foamy mucus. Otherwise, the patient appears alert and generally healthy. The disease spreads rapidly from one dog to another, but it does not affect people. Signs appear in 3 to 10 days after the dog contracts the disease. Vaccines are available to protect against kennel cough.

Important Points in Treatment

1. This disease is self-limiting. This means that, unless complications (such as pneumonia) occur, the signs usually disappear in 1 to 3 weeks. Antibiotics and/or other supportive treatments may be needed.
2. *Diet:* Ordinarily, no special diet is required.
3. *Activity:* Exercise stimulates coughing and should be severely restricted. Sudden changes in air temperature or pressure on the neck from collars and leashes may also stimulate coughing.
4. *Medication:* Give all medication as directed. Call the doctor if you are unable to do so.

Notify the Doctor if Any of the Following Occur

- Your dog's cough persists or worsens.
- Your dog becomes depressed.
- Your dog loses weight.