



COMMUNITY SERVICES
Irvine Animal Care Center

CANINE INFECTIOUS RESPIRATORY DISEASE COMPLEX: KENNEL COUGH

Congratulations on your new dog! The center staff has worked very hard to ensure the health of your dog, but Canine Infectious Respiratory Disease Complex is a very common disease in dogs adopted from shelters. Here is some information about this condition and how you can prevent your newly adopted dog from developing this condition and lead a happy, healthy life!

WHAT IS CIRDC?

CIRDC is similar to the common cold in people. It is highly contagious and most commonly caused by Bordatella bronchiseptica, although there are other bacteria and viruses that can also cause CIRDC. It easily spreads among dogs in shelters and other areas multiple dogs frequent, such as dog parks, day care, and boarding facilities.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF CIRDC?

- Cough
- Discharge from the nose and/or eyes
- Mild lethargy

Many dogs and puppies have been exposed to one or more of these viruses and bacteria during their lifetime, but previous infection will not always provide permanent immunity.

The incubation period is anywhere from 3-14 days, depending on the causative agent. A dog may appear healthy at adoption but show signs over the next few days because a virus or bacteria was incubating.

HOW IS CIRDC SPREAD?

CIRDC is spread by air (from coughing and sneezing), hands, shared toys, and even the clothes of those who handle them. It is as common in a shelter as it is in a day care center.



CIRDC is contagious to other dogs, so keeping current household dogs and new arrivals separated for at least 14 days after adoption is advised to minimize the chance of transmitting CIRDC between the new and old canine family members. Also be sure your current dog(s) are up-to-date on their vaccines, including Bordatella.

Vaccinated, healthy dogs can still get CIRDC, but signs are usually very mild.

WHAT IS THE TREATMENT FOR CIRDC?

Contact your veterinarian if your dog has difficulty breathing or shows signs of CIRDC.

Oral antibiotics are often given, especially when a bacterial cause, such as Bordatella, is suspected. Eye ointment may be used if the eyes are red or have discharge. Treatment is otherwise symptomatic, and most dogs recover within 2-3 weeks. Coughing may persist for an additional few weeks.

Provide a warm, stress-free environment. Use a harness (not a collar) for walking, and avoid areas where other dogs frequent.