

Kennel Cough Vaccine may not be enough to protect our precious pets.

Canine influenza (Dog Flu) is an important illness that poses an emerging threat to all dogs.

What is canine influenza (dog flu)?

Dog flu is a contagious respiratory virus in dogs caused by a specific Type A influenza virus referred to as a “canine influenza virus.” This is a disease of dogs, not of humans. Canine influenza virus (CIV) causes a respiratory infection in dogs that is often referred to as canine influenza.

What are the symptoms of this infection in dogs?

The symptoms of this illness in dogs are cough, runny nose and fever. Canine influenza normally causes mild respiratory symptoms, which are frequently confused with those of kennel cough.

The dog flu virus, H3H8, was first identified in 2004. The virus was first noted at a dog race in Florida. Since then, the virus has spread rapidly and become a problem for pet owners around the United States. Fortunately, in May of 2009, a vaccine was released that helps prevent and reduce the spread of the virus.

CIV is a relatively new virus, so almost all dogs are susceptible to infection when they are newly exposed because they have not built up natural immunity. Most dogs that develop CIV infection have a mild illness, but some dogs get very sick and require treatment. Animals of any age are susceptible. Outbreaks can occur year-round, not just in winter months. Cats, so far, are not affected.

There is an effective and safe vaccine for canine influenza fully licensed by the USDA. Nobivac[®] Canine Flu H3N8 has been shown to control the spread and minimize the impact of CIV infection and has been proven safe in half a million dogs. The initial vaccination of two shots spaced several weeks apart typically costs anywhere from \$25 to \$60; an annual booster is required thereafter.

Ailing pets can infect other canines for 7 to 10 days and infected dogs take 2 to 3 weeks to recover from canine influenza.