

Canine Corona Virus

This is a highly contagious, rapidly spread virus which affects the gastrointestinal system of dogs. However, it is generally not a fatal disease, is self-limiting, and frequently asymptomatic. It affects dogs of all ages but puppies are more seriously affected because of the severe dehydration they experience.

The virus is primarily shed in the feces of infected dogs. The virus enters orally and begins to replicate once it reaches the small intestine. New virus particles are then shed in the feces and the cycle continues.

Diagnostic signs include:

- * anorexia (lack of appetite) and depression (lack of energy)
- * vomiting
- * diarrhea - may be loose, watery, mucousy and yellow-green to orange in color. Blood may be present. Particularly foul smelling.
- * fever

Time can resolve most cases. In general, affected dogs spontaneously recover in 7 to 10 days, but the diarrhea may persist for 3-4 weeks. If necessary, treatment is primarily supportive and focussed on maintaining hydration. Supportive therapy may include frequent small, bland meals, a warm environment, and reduced stress for the dog. Antibiotics may be used if secondary bacterial infection occurs.

Vaccination is the best source for prevention. Since fecal material is the main source of infection, it would be best if your dog avoided contact with infected dogs or their feces. Rates of infection are influenced by crowding, unsanitary conditions, and environmental stresses. Thus, good owners can reduce the chance of infection by monitoring these risk factors. As for most viruses, the health status of the dog can influence its chance of developing clinical symptoms following exposure