

# INFO FOR NEW DOG ADOPTERS - -CANINE DISTEMPER-



## *What you should know about Canine Distemper*

Congratulations on your new dog! The shelter staff has worked very hard to ensure the health of your dog, but Canine Distemper can be a common disease in dogs adopted from shelters. That's because many of the pets who come into this shelter for adoption have *never* been vaccinated. Here is some information about this condition and how you can help your newly adopted dog recover and lead a long and healthy life!



## Did you know?...

- Canine Distemper is a very serious and highly contagious disease that can be fatal if not treated. The disease is caused by a virus that is spread among dogs in shelters and other places where there are a lot of pets.
- Canine Distemper is spread by air borne exposure to the virus in the respiratory secretions of infected pets.



- ***Canine Distemper is HIGHLY contagious to "at risk" dogs -- puppies under four months of age and dogs that have not been vaccinated are most at risk but ANY dog can contract Canine Distemper.***

- Canine distemper could spread to your other dogs, especially if they are not vaccinated.

- **Signs of Canine Distemper include eye discharge, fever, nasal discharge, coughing, reduced appetite, diarrhea and vomiting. As the disease progresses, infected dogs could develop seizures, twitching or paralysis.**

- There is a Canine Distemper vaccine, but giving this vaccine to an animal who's already infected *will not* help the animal recover any quicker. There are *no* medications that will kill the virus in already infected dogs and puppies. Treatment primarily addresses symptoms of the illness, not the virus.

## When should you seek treatment?

You should always take your new dog or puppy to a veterinarian within 2 days of adoption, for a routine health check. Canine Distemper is a serious health risk for your pet so your vet should be contacted at the **FIRST** sign of any illness, no matter the symptoms.

## Can Canine Distemper be prevented?

**YES!!!!** Regular vaccinations are KEY to prevention and puppies especially need to see a vet to protect them from this serious and potentially deadly disease. Puppy owners should be especially careful taking their pet to any place where animals may congregate as this greatly increases their risk of exposure. Protect adult dogs with regular vaccinations and avoid exposure to infected animals. **ALL** pets should receive yearly checkups at vet!



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