

**Kennel Cough**

Kennel Cough is a contagious upper respiratory illness much like the common cold in humans. It is spread between dogs via an airborne virus and is common in shelter or kennel environments. Kennel Cough is often complicated by a secondary bacterial infection which requires antibiotics to treat.

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| **Common Symptoms:**   * Dry, hacking cough, often accompanied by gagging and/or vomiting foamy mucus * Frequent sneezing * Nasal discharge which can vary from clear-colored to thick, green-yellow | **When to alert Foster Department:**   * Any symptoms worsen * Has not eaten in 24 hours * Notable decrease in energy level or lethargic behavior * Trouble breathing (frequent panting, open-mouth breathing, wheezing) |

***Coughing is usually the symptom that lingers for the longest amount of time and tends to occur more often in the morning, nighttime, and/or at times of heightened activity.***

**Is Kennel Cough contagious?**

Yes, Kennel Cough is contagious to other dogs, but not to humans or other pets such as cats. Any time you bring a foster animal into your home, your household pets are at risk of contracting an illness. To minimize the risk of your resident dog(s) contracting Kennel Cough we recommend keeping them up to date on the Bordetella vaccine and keeping them in a separate area from your foster dog. If you choose to allow your resident dog(s) to interact with your foster dog, avoid allowing them to share food or water bowls, toys, treats, or bedding. Foster animals with Kennel Cough are allowed to go out and about on walks or car trips, but you should avoid direct contact with other dogs to minimize the risk of spreading Kennel Cough.

**Tips for administering medication**

* Your foster animal may be provided with antibiotics in liquid form or as tablets/pills.
* Note each time you give your foster medication on the med chart provided in your packet. Medications should be given at approximately the same time daily.
* It is important to finish all of the medication provided even if your foster animal’s symptoms improve.
* The best way to give your foster animal their medication is with treats. Squirt the liquid onto or hide the tablets/pills in:
  + spoonful of canned dog food
  + chunk of cheese
  + slice of deli meat
  + spoonful of peanut butter
* We recommend giving medication before your foster animal’s meal(s) to ensure they are hungry and eat the whole treat. Always ensure your foster does not spit out their medication.
* If your foster animal will not take their medication in a treat, please see the attached VCA informational flyer for administering medication.

**In order to keep your foster animal comfortable and have a speedy recovery**

* Monitor their food and water intake- Your foster animal may have a lack of appetite so offer a variety of foods to peak their interest. You can mix kibble with canned food, try different types of canned food, or add plain cooked rice or boiled chicken.
* Minimize stress- Keep your foster animal set up in a warm, comfortable area of your home where they can get plenty of rest.
* Warm compress- Wet a hand towel with warm (not hot!) water and hold it onto your foster animal’s eyes or nose for approximately 30 seconds to loosen any dried, crusty discharge.
* Humidify- Use your bathroom to help soothe sore air passageways. Turn the shower on hot, close any doors and windows to allow the room to become steamy, and place your foster animal into the bathroom (not in the shower) for 10 minutes at a time.

**Remember to contact the SSPCA Foster Department to schedule a vet recheck BEFORE you get to the end of your foster animal’s medication!**