

2015 Dog Flu Virus Q and A: Canine Influenza Still On The Rise

by ThoughtsFurPaws.com

Flu season may be winding down for humans, but there have been over 1,000 reported cases of canine influenza in Chicago, causing some local vets to call the situation an "epidemic." The outbreak also spread to dogs across the Midwest, and infected many pooches right here in Cleveland.

To help dog owners better understand the virus, here are some key facts from the American Veterinary Medical Association:

What is canine influenza?

Canine influenza (CI), or dog flu, is a highly contagious infection caused by an influenza A subtype H₃N₈ virus first discovered in 2004.

What are common symptoms of the infection in dogs?

In the mild form, the most common sign is a cough that persists for 2-3 weeks. However, some dogs can develop signs of severe pneumonia, such as a high-grade fever (104° F to 106° F) and faster breathing. Other signs in infected dogs include nasal and/or ocular discharge, sneezing, fatigue and refusing food.

Is every dog at risk of infection?

All dogs, regardless of breed or age, are susceptible to infection.

How does it spread?

Canine influenza is spread from dog to dog through the air, contaminated objects (kennel surfaces, food and water bowls, collars and leashes) and people interacting with infected and uninfected dogs. On surfaces, the virus is alive and can infect dogs for up to 48 hours, on clothing for 24 hours and on hands for 12 hours.

Can veterinarians test for canine influenza?

The most reliable and sensitive method for confirmation is serologic testing. Antibodies to canine influenza virus can appear in blood as early as seven (7) days after symptoms begin, and the virus may be identified in nasal or pharyngeal swabs during the first four (4) days of illness.

Any treatment options?

In May 2009, the USDA approved the first influenza vaccine for dogs. Trials have shown ↗

("2015 Dog Flu Virus" cont.)

that it can significantly reduce the duration of illness, including the incidence and severity of damage to the lungs. Dog owners should consult with their vet to determine whether the vaccine is appropriate for their dog.

Can canine influenza infect people?

There is no evidence that the virus can be transmitted from dogs to humans.

I want to note here also that both Bordetella and the influenza virus have symptoms that mimic one another. In about 20 percent of cases, more severe symptoms occur including high fever and pneumonia. A small number of dogs with the virus have died from complications of the disease.

For more information about canine influenza virus, visit the American Veterinary Medicine Association or the Center for Disease Control. ☐

Gardening Poses Serious Risks to Your Pet

This is a fabulous time of the year to be outside with your pets while you do a clean up of your flower beds and shrubbery and put in new plantings. However, managing your garden can also present dangers to your pets which you probably don't even realize.

Plants to Avoid at All Costs

There are a number of common garden shrubs and flowers which have no business being on a property where pets reside. Many people do not realize that amaryllis, rhododendron, chrysanthemum, dieffenbachia and lilies are all highly toxic to dogs and cats. Not only should you avoid adding them to your landscaping, you should seriously consider removing them if you already have them in the ground. Otherwise, consider fully fencing them off from pets.

For more about plants toxic to dogs and cats, visit the Cornell University website.

Embrace your Weeds and Dandelions!

In the all-American quest for a lawn that is a smooth carpet of green, you may very well be creating a chemically infused landscape. The most dangerous thing many gardeners touch is probably the "fertilizer" they spread all over the lawn, not realizing that most of the commercial products use chemicals to help grow a luscious green lawn and are also laden with poisons to kill weeds. Those toxic ingredients pose a terrible danger to pets (and small children, too) who are all over the grass, nibbling ↘

(*"Gardening Poses Serious Risks cont.*)

on it, getting it on their paws and then licking it off later. Dogs and cats are grazers, frequently nibbling on grass, which is unfortunately now drenched in herbicides and pesticides.

Don't be afraid of weeds! Once you cut them when you mow, they don't look all that different than grass. There are many good organic fertilizers for the lawn and garden and companies that have "Safe Paws" education about natural gardening solutions for organic weed and insect control.

A few tips everyone should keep in mind are:

- Keep compost in an area or container pets cannot access—decomposing organic material can seriously sicken pets while it is breaking down.
- Never put bones or other waste human food materials in compost because it is too attractive to pets, who may go to great lengths to access it.
- Never use cocoa mulch which is really appealing to dogs and has been linked to fatalities.
- Be very careful about any mulch you use to top dress garden areas. It can smell or taste good to dogs and can contain mold or bacteria if it has been bagged or piled up for long periods.
- Grass clippings can be fatal to dogs if they become moldy, depending on the type of grass and grass seeds. Disperse grass after mowing, so not allow it to pile up anywhere.
- Mow grass frequently to make it less hospitable to insect and parasite populations.
- Do not allow even small amounts of water to form a pool in pots, bird baths or wheelbarrows since standing water becomes a breeding ground for bacteria, parasites and mosquitoes.
- When fertilizing the garden with organic preparations (like fish emulsion or chicken or cow manure) be aware that they are highly aromatic to dogs and cats, who will be drawn to eat that treated soil. Monitor your pet outdoors in the early gardening period when applying these products and try to dissuade your pet from ingesting your gardening handiwork. One way to do this is to dramatically say "Oh no!" or "Uh oh!" to interrupt their interest in the area and then say "Good girl!" and send them away from the garden by tossing a high value treat at a distance, making a game of it.

—Tracie Hotchner □

How To Get Rid Of Ticks On Your Dogs Quickly and Efficiently!

With summer on its way, it is inevitable that your dog will be outside playing and tromping through grass and fields. You and your pup will be out on walks, hikes and anywhere and everywhere were fleas and/or ticks usually linger. Therefore, it's always a good idea that you implement a tick check on your dog after your dog has spent some time outdoors.

**Do a tick check on your dog's body
and then check your family**

Don't count on repellents to do the work for you as it can take one to two days for an attached tick to transmit an infection to its host, your dog, and it's important to promptly get rid of these parasites. First, run your fingers slowly over your dog's entire body. If you feel a bump or swollen area, check to see if a tick has burrowed there. Don't limit your search to your dog's torso: check between his toes, under his armpits, the insides of his ears and around his face and chin.

How To Get Rid Of Ticks

Make sure to check for ticks on your family members. Dogs can't directly transmit tick-borne illnesses to people, but ticks can move from host to host. A tick may enter your home on your dog's back and move on to another pet or person, or a tick could hitch a ride on you and then move on to one of your pets. A good tick prevention strategy includes checking all family members for these parasites, especially after outdoor activities in wooded, grassy areas.

What does a tick look like?

Ticks can be black, brown or tan, and they have eight legs. Ticks are arachnids and related to spiders, not insects. They can also be tiny (some tick species are only as large as the head of a pin) so look carefully. Be sure to check inside and behind his ears and around his eyes—all favorite tick hiding places.

Ticks transmit several diseases that can cause severe illness and even death in both dogs and humans, so keeping your dog tick-free is a top priority. Huge numbers of tick eggs hatch each spring, and the young ticks climb onto grasses and other vegetation. Their sticky shells help them to cling to passing animals, including your adventurous pet dog.

Ticks quickly climb down the hair, attach to the skin, and begin to suck blood, only dropping off hours or days later when they are engorged. In the meantime, any microorganisms that were hitching a ride inside this insect traveler are transmitted to your dog through the tick's mouth.

**Use a tick and flea protection
during the spring and summer months**

Use a tick preventive during the spring and summer



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("How To Get rid Of Ticks" cont.)

months. Several products on the market kill both fleas and ticks. You can apply these products monthly to the skin at the back of your dog's neck. Ask your veterinarian to recommend the most effective product for your dog. But, as mentioned above, always check for ticks after an outdoor outing in addition to a flea and tick prevention product.

If your dog has a tick on him or her, follow the below steps to get rid of the ticks.

1. Make sure to have a pair of gloves, a clean pair of tweezers or a commercial tick remover, antiseptic and Isopropyl alcohol. Wear gloves if you remove with your fingers.
2. Use a pair of tweezers to grasp the head of the tick where it attaches to the skin.
3. Pull on the tick gently and steadily. If you yank the tick away from your dog too quickly, you'll leave part of the tick's mouth behind, which can cause an infection.
4. In about 20 to 30 seconds, the tick's mouth will release its grasp and the tick will come away cleanly. Dab some disinfectant on your dog on the bitten area, being extremely careful if you're around your dog's eyes and kill the tick by placing it in alcohol.
5. Next, save the dead tick in a resealable plastic bag, labeled with the date on which the tick was found. This may sound weird and kind of gross, but if your dog becomes ill, you may need to identify the species of tick that bit him.

Never remove a tick with your bare hands, and never crush a tick between your fingers. If you do, you put yourself at risk of contracting Lyme disease or one of the other tick-borne diseases.

If your dog becomes ill and you recently found a tick on him, make sure to call your vet immediately. Most tick-borne diseases can be treated successfully if a diagnosis is made immediately and appropriate treatment initiated. With daily tick checks and/or prevention, you can avoid anything serious.

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("The Basics of Good Quality Pet Nutrition" cont.)

good nutrition. Quality nutrition transcends the difference between people and animals but for quite a few years now, my focus has been pet nutrition. Through research, experience and applying my knowledge with our rescue animals, I have developed an excellent fundamental knowledge of nutrition and pet health and how good nutrition plays such a major role in the health, wellbeing and longevity of our pets.

Many mass-marketed pet foods are loaded with poor quality ingredients derived from sources far from wholesome. This is definitely not fare fit for human consumption and not fit for your pet.

According to a report by the Animal Protection Institute of America, more than 95% of our companion animals obtain their nutritional needs from a single source—highly processed commercial pet food. The report clearly shows "that what you purchase and what the manufacturers advertise are two entirely different products" states Alan Berger, President of the Institute. "The difference is threatening your pet's health, cutting short any chance of him enjoying old age, and maybe even killing him now." The ingredients they are using are not wholesome, and the harsh manufacturing practices that make those nifty little shapes, the ones our companion animals surely love to eat, destroy what little nutritional value the food ever had.

Ingredients are cooked up together and "manufactured" into food. Pesticides, hormone residues, and euthanizing drugs survive the manufacturing process and are present in the bags and cans of pet food sold to consumers.

It is no wonder that 40-50 years ago, our pets and animals lived to see the age of 15-25 years. Today, 5-15 is more the norm. Why might this be? Today, it is standard practice to add preservatives and chemicals to our food. Due to our farming techniques, our soils are depleted and lack many of the nutrients we need for good health. The environment has become very toxic.

It's a very sad state of affairs and no coincidence that this comes at a time in our history with the dominance of large multinational corporations running the show. The pet food industry is run by some of the largest corporations who, regardless of their friendly and warm statements and advertising techniques, are in reality flat out lying to us, sadly only care about profits and care NOTHING about our pets.

The good news is that if we are aware of and alert to these negative advertising techniques and knowledgeable in what to look for in providing quality nutrition, there are some very good products available. Add products to the mix such as Nutramin, which contains all the natural ingredients missing from our soils and we then "synergistically" provide the excellent support, for the highest quality nutrition, we need for our beloved pet's.

So, how do we determine just what is good and what is bad, in terms of pet nutrition? When reading a food label, it is important to understand that the first three ingredients on the food label usually represent 90% of that diet.

Also realize that the longer the ingredient list, the worse the diet, as good nutrition is not only simple but also healthy.



The Basics of Good Quality Pet Nutrition

by Michael Goldman, Co-Founder
with his wife Terry of the HEALTHY PET NETWORK

Pet nutrition, especially in regards to healthy pet food, is a very important factor in the overall equation for the health and longevity of our beloved pets.

With this being said, just what is the definition of nutrition? According to the BING dictionary, nutrition is defined as: "processing of food: the process of absorbing nutrients from food and processing them in the body in order to keep healthy or to grow."

In my working days, as a teacher and certified fitness instructor I spent a lot of time studying diet and the components of ↗

("The Basics of Good Quality Pet Nutrition" cont.)

Which chemical additives should not be in the food? Avoid (like the plague) foods that contain BHA, BHT and ethoxyquin. These chemicals may be added to protect the color of the food and antioxidants, but why?

If only "by-products" are listed on the label and not a detailed description of them, do not consider this food. It is best to stay away from by-products, as we do not know what they are.

It is critical that you learn to read the labels on the food you buy for your beloved pets. As we have learned, the first three ingredients are approximately 90% of the diet contained in the bag or can. These first ingredients should be headed by "high quality" protein sources. Stay away from preservatives and dyes and learn to recognize what they are. You will find that when buying these cheaper foods, the first ingredients are usually grains such as corn, wheat and by-products, etc. that are used because they are cheap but they can be very detrimental to your pets health.

No simple carbohydrates or sugars. If you use grains at all keep them to a minimum. Be sure to use whole grains such as whole grain oats, whole grain rice or pearl barley.

There are many touted types of diets including raw, grain free and more. We will not be discussing these various "diets" here. You will need to do your own due diligence to determine which one to use with your pet.

Again the key is an abundance of quality ingredients along with a good understanding of which items are good and which items to avoid like the plague.

Hopefully this will give you some insight to selecting a healthy diet for your pet.

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About the Author: Michael Goldman is an entrepreneur, teacher, writer/author and animal care provider, who along with his wife Terry are best known as the founders of the Healthy Pet Network. As respected authorities and consultants regarding Animal Health & Longevity, they help people with their pet's health & wellbeing. Their "passion" is the continued development of the Healthy Pet Network Animal Rescue and Sanctuary. The Rescue and Sanctuary provides a home, food, medical attention and love for homeless or injured animals. For more information, or to reach Michael, please visit their informational blog: www.healthypetnetwork.net. □

Fleas Are A Pain On The Dog!

With flea season at its' highest are the most susceptible to fleas. Fleas on our dogs are annoying for our pups and if they don't get treated right away, it can lead to bigger health issues and a longer case of flea infestation.

Dogs are very susceptible to fleas

Fleas are hearty and nimble, and when searching for a host, they can jump anywhere and at such a fast pace. ↗

("Fleas Are A Pain On The Dog" cont.)

three pairs of legs make for excellent leaping capabilities and a laterally flattened body allows for quick movement in a dog's fur.

With a complete life cycle ranging anywhere from 15 days to 21 months, depending on environmental conditions, fleas are most commonly found on a dog's stomach, the base of the tail and his or her head. With heavy infestations, however, fleas can thrive anywhere on the body. They feed once every day or two, and generally remain on their host during the interim which is why the sooner you catch it, the quicker you can get rid of them.

Below are some of the symptoms that your dog has fleas:

- Droppings or "flea dirt" in a dog's coat,
- Flea eggs on dog or in dog's environment,
- Excessive scratching, licking or biting at skin,
- Hair loss,
- Scabs and hot spots and/or
- Pale gums.

Fleas are about half the size of an apple seed, but may be as large as the size of a grain of rice. They're jumping insects, with laterally flat bodies, and they have no wings. If you don't see actual fleas, look for flea poop. Flea waste may collect on the skin of your pet, and will look like tiny crumbles of dirt.

Some dogs even have an allergic reaction to fleas

When a dog has a heightened sensitivity to the saliva of fleas, just one bite of a flea can cause an allergic reaction. This condition is known as flea allergy dermatitis and causes intense itching and discomfort for your dog. Signs include generalized hair loss, reddened skin, scabs and hot spots. Flea allergy dermatitis often leads to skin infections.

Not all scratching indicates fleas on dogs. Scratching of the ears may indicate ear mites or another ear infection. Scratching or licking other parts of your pet's body may indicate a food allergy, or other irritation.

Dogs in warmer climates

are more susceptible to fleas

Dogs who live in warm, humid climates, where fleas thrive at temperatures of 65° to 80° F and those who live outdoors are most vulnerable to fleas.

If you think your dog has fleas,

call your veterinarian for the best treatment

As soon as you think your dog has fleas, make sure to see your veterinarian who will confirm the diagnosis and discuss appropriate treatment options. It is important to tailor your treatment to your dog and his environment, since certain products in combination can be toxic. Your veterinarian can also determine the best plan for preventing fleas in the future as well.

Some of the common treatments an/or options include a topical, liquid treatment applied to the back of the neck, shampoos, sprays and powders. Some products kill both adult fleas and their eggs, but they can vary in efficacy. It is very

(continued on the last page)



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("Fleas Are A Pain On The Dog" cont.)

important not to use products on your dog that are intended for cats (and vice versa). Prescription products are generally more effective and safer than over-the-counter products.

When treating fleas, it is important that all of your pets are treated for fleas, including indoor and outdoor cats and that the environment is treated as well.

Tips to prevent fleas on your dogs

1. Thoroughly clean your house, including rugs, bedding and upholstery. (Remember to discard any vacuum bags.) In severe cases, you might consider using a spray or fogger, which requires temporary evacuation of the home.

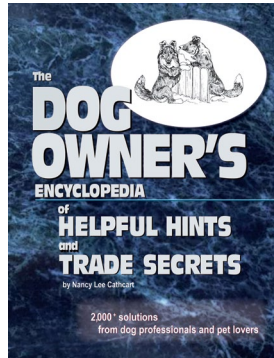
2. Using a flea comb on your dog and washing his bedding once a week will go a long way toward controlling flea infestation. Also, it is important to treat your yard as thoroughly as your house. Concentrate on shady areas, where fleas live, and use an insecticide or nematodes, microscopic worms that kill flea larvae.

3. Use flea shampoos, even when no fleas are present. If the flea repelling shampoos appear to be too harsh for your dog, try adding a few drops of eucalyptus, lavender, tea tree and citronella essential oils to some unscented castile soap. Essential oils may irritate cats, so only try this with dogs. Adding brewer's yeast and garlic to your dog's food may also help to repel fleas.

4. Try adding apple cider vinegar daily to your dog's drinking water. Not only does it deter fleas, it improves a pups skin and coat condition from the inside-out.

As always, the best way to be flea-free is to prevent infestations in the first place. Treat your dogs monthly with a veterinarian recommended spot-on flea repellent. In areas with an especially high flea population, you may consider allowing your pet to wear a flea collar while they're cavorting outdoors or try some of the natural homeopathic repellents on the market.

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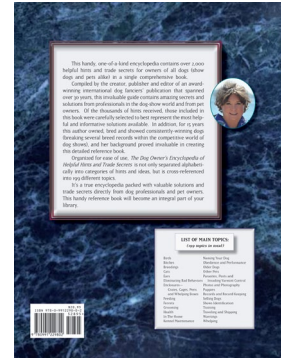
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