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## **Canine Influenza**

- Canine influenza, sometimes referred to as canine flu, is an emerging respiratory disease in dogs. It is caused by an influenza virus that has caused disease in horses (equine influenza H3N8) for over 40 years.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has never documented a case of human infection with the equine influenza virus. There is no evidence to date of canine influenza being transmitted to humans.
- Canine influenza is believed to have originated in Florida and was first diagnosed in racing greyhounds.
- All dogs are susceptible and the virus appears to be quite contagious. The disease has been found in at least 11 states. It was originally identified by researchers at the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine. While racetracks and kennels have had the highest incidence of disease, canine influenza has also occurred in shelters, pet shops and in pet dogs.
- The likely route of transmission is aerosol—or through the air. The virus can also spread by contact with contaminated inanimate objects such as clothing. Following good hygiene practices is important.
- There have been no confirmed cases in Tennessee.
- The majority of dogs infected with canine influenza will only develop mild symptoms. These symptoms, which mimic kennel cough, can include a cough, nasal discharge, fever and sometimes listlessness.
- Some dogs will develop more severe disease and secondary bacterial infections such as pneumonia can occur. According to the CDC, the proportion of dogs that have fatal disease is small.

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- Mortality rates between 1-10% have been reported, highest in puppies, elderly animals and animals suffering other health problems.
- Vaccinations against bordetella and parainfluenza virus will not protect your dog against canine influenza.
- While there is no vaccine available, work is underway to produce one.
- Contact your veterinarian if your dog is exhibiting any signs of a respiratory illness. Be sure to tell your veterinarian if your dog has been around other dogs recently (boarding kennel, etc.).
- Most importantly, use common sense and seek advice from your veterinarian.

Information from the CDC, AVMA and Florida State Veterinarian's office was used to prepare this sheet.

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