

West Lakeland Veterinary Group

Is your dog protected against Canine Parvovirus? (CPV)

Canine Parvovirus is a real threat to your dog in the UK . Periodic outbreaks up and down the country are causing unnecessary suffering to our dogs .

As recently as last week outbreaks were confirmed in Cumbria.

What is Canine Parvovirus ?

It is a highly contagious viral infection of dogs.

How does my dog contract Parvovirus?

Your dog will contract CPV by oral contact with infected faeces, soil or other viral infected substances (fomites).

What symptoms will my dog show ?

By far the most common symptoms exhibited by a dog with CPV infection are severe gastro- intestinal disease characterised by bloody diarrhoea and vomiting . This may be accompanied by a fever, lethargy, dehydration and a painful abdomen. They may also have swollen glandular tissue (lymph nodes).

Laboratory tests may show that your dog may be lacking in certain types of white blood cells which are essential for keeping regular every day infections at bay.

Can my dog be treated if they have contracted CPV ?

There is no specific treatment for CPV. Maintaining a high level of supportive care is the only way to give your dog a fighting chance . This will almost definitely involve hospitalisation for intensive care.

Can dogs recover from CPV?

The death rate in untreated animals is approaching 91 percent . With an aggressive treatment regime survival rate can be as high as 80 percent, however this is largely dependent on speed of diagnosis, the age of the

animal and the breed involved. It is well known that certain breeds are more predisposed to infection such as Chihuahua, Pomeranian, Rottweiler. Dogs may shed the virus in their faeces for 12 months or more following recovery making them a source of infection for other dogs.

How can I protect my dog ?

Vaccination has been shown to be a highly effective way of controlling and preventing CPV. Young puppies from a vaccinated bitch will gain maternal antibodies from the milk. This protection starts to decrease a few weeks after birth .

Puppies can then be vaccinated from as early as 6 weeks of age, although in general most commercial vaccination protocols do not finish until at least 10 weeks of age.

This timing ensures that all maternal antibodies which may affect the vaccine effectiveness are minimised.

Canine parvovirus protection is included in most initial puppy vaccinations which could also include diseases such as Distemper, Canine hepatitis, P.influenza and Leptospirosis.

Some people say that my dog doesn't need booster vaccinations?

The vaccination of dogs has brought much media attention over the years. Some people have the view that it is not necessary and that initial vaccinations are sufficient. Veterinary vaccine companies have spent millions of pounds on research and development of these products to ensure that they are as effective as possible at providing your pet with all the protection that it needs against CPV and other diseases. Vaccines have been modified over the years to keep up with new emerging strains of these virus' and yearly booster vaccinations are vital to ensure that antibody protection remains high .

There are many unjustified opinions however scientific evidence is very clear. Vaccination is the best way to reduce your pets risk of developing disease!