

# New F-Strain Parvo Virus

## Warning!

New F-Strain Parvo Virus:

Unlike the other strains of parvo (this appears to be the 7<sup>th</sup> mutation of the PARVO virus), this one may possibly be airborne. Apparently this has been brought to this country (USA) from Europe.

This strain is more deadly than the other strains of parvo and needs to be treated more aggressively. Dogs contracting this new strain will have accelerated symptoms and those dogs which are infected usually die of dehydration and shock because it commonly attacks the intestines causing severe, bloody diarrhea and vomiting. Making matters worse, it prevents the absorption of nutrients and fluids. As a further complication, it can also attack a dog's heart causing congestive heart failure. This complication can occur months or years after an apparent recovery from the intestinal form of the disease.

It is most commonly contracted by puppies because their immature immune systems can't fight the virus off but adults can contract it as well. Adults can be carriers without showing any clinical signs. Parvo is most often fatal but, if an infected puppy survives, a complete recovery can occur. Typically, however, survivors remain somewhat un-healthy and weak for life.

The canine parvovirus can be transmitted by direct contact or indirectly by contact with vomit, diarrhea or any contaminated discharges from an infected dog. It is excreted in the feces of infected dogs and if someone or something (human, dog, bird, etc.) steps in it, it can be transported to new areas. It can also be transmitted on hands, clothing and even car tires. Because parvo attacks swiftly, time is of the essence. If you feel your dog has been exposed to parvo, or it is showing symptoms, contact your veterinarian or an emergency veterinary hospital. From the time symptoms appear to the time of death can be as little as six hours. Fluids and electrolytes must be given to offset what the dog is losing. Care should be given immediately!

The symptoms of parvo include a sudden onset of vomiting, bloody diarrhea, dehydration, lethargy, high temperature and sometimes sudden death. Symptoms are similar in adults, although they can be less acute. It strikes with a quick vengeance, and pet owners often make the comment that their dog was up and playing a few hours prior to the animal becoming extremely ill.

Typically, it takes 7-10 days from the time of infection for the dog to start showing clinical signs and to test positive for parvo. Once the parvovirus is introduced into an animal's environment, it can remain active for up to 9 months for possibly even longer. It is very hardy and can withstand wide temperature fluctuations and most cleaning agents. In fact most disinfectants cannot kill the virus but chlorine bleach is the most effective and inexpensive. Any areas thought to be contaminated should be thoroughly washed with 1 ounce of bleach per quart of water.

### **F strain symptoms to watch for:**

Gelatin-like stool with some blood.

Vomiting with bile and foam.

Rapid weight loss (within a few hours after becoming ill.)

Temperature goes up to 106 or 107 degrees (You may or may not see a temperature rise)

Not drinking—acts normal, playing but rests more often—probably not eating

Lethargic—lays around, dehydration continues—at this point the dog will DIE in LESS than 24 hours unless it is detected in the first stage (not drinking and low grade temperature)

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Like all viruses, there is no cure. Vets simply try to keep the dog alive by preventing dehydration and loss of proteins by giving fluids, electrolytes, controlling body temperature, giving blood transfusions when necessary and regulating systems in the body during the course of the disease. The only medication that helps is SULFAMETHOXAZOLE TRIMETHOPRIM (bactrin). The dosage is 2cc per puppy under 10 pounds (even newborns) followed by equal amounts of water or electrolytes. Adults 18 to 25 pounds get 7 cc followed by at least equal fluids. This therapy may keep the animal alive long enough for an immune response to develop.

If you've recently lost a dog to parvo, veterinarians recommend that you wait six months to a year before putting a new puppy or non-vaccinated dog in to an infected environment (even if you have disinfected it). To immediately bring an animal into a situation where one has recently died of Parvo is a virtual death sentence for the new puppy. It is strongly recommend that there be no movement of dogs in or out of a kennel until 30 days have passed since last dog either recovered or died. Do not take your puppy out of your home where it can infect or be infected until it has had the complete series of shots. By keeping it isolated you may save its life.

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