



Southside Animal Hospital

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Canine Influenza

What is Canine Influenza? Canine Influenza is a respiratory viral infection in dogs (Influenza H3N8). It was discovered in greyhound racing dogs in Florida in 2004. It has spread over the country since and has confirmed in at least 31 states, including Georgia. It is believed to have developed from equine influenza.

What are signs of Canine Influenza? Canine Influenza can have symptoms similar to Kennel Cough, although it is more serious. Dogs will display signs including a nagging hacking cough, runny nose, eye discharge, lethargy, lack of appetite, and fever. 8% of dogs will get pneumonia. In these dogs, if untreated, the disease can be fatal.

How is Canine Influenza Spread? This virus spread by respiratory secretions of an infected dog. This can be airborne by coughing or by infecting bowls, clothes, or other things in the environment. Canine Influenza is a highly contagious disease. 80% of dogs exposed to the virus will become sick. 100% of exposed animals will shed the virus to other animals. It only effects dogs and is not contagious to cats, humans, or other animals. Dogs most at risk for the disease are ones that are exposed to a variety of other dogs. This is most likely to happen at the groomer, parks, walks where other dogs are present, dog shows, and boarding facilities.

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How do you treat Canine Influenza? If we suspect your pet has Canine Influenza, we will treat your pet aggressively. We will treat with antibiotics to treat for or prevent pneumonia. We will also treat with a cough suppressant to provide coughing relief for your pet.

Treatment is usually very successful as long as an advanced pneumonia is not present.

How do you prevent Canine Influenza? There is a vaccination for Canine Influenza. It is given by injection to pets. The first year, two doses need to be given three weeks apart. After this, annual vaccinations are given. The vaccination will lessen viral shedding and decrease the spread of the disease. It also lessens the severity of clinical signs and decreases the occurrence of serious signs like pneumonia. We recommend the vaccination for all dogs that receive the Bordetella vaccination. This is animals that go to the groomer, parks, dog shows, and boarding facilities. **This vaccination will be required for all dogs that board at Southside Animal Hospital.**

