

Canine Influenza Outbreak

As many people have seen in the media over the past couple of weeks, there is currently an outbreak of Canine Influenza that has been identified in the Chicago and surrounding areas. Canine Influenza can cause the following clinical signs: high fever, lethargy, loss of appetite, coughing, and nasal discharge. This virus is spread through close contact with an affected dog (such as at a dog show, dog park, boarding kennel, etc.). It had been previously thought that the current outbreak was caused by the more common H3N8 strain (which has been found in the US since 2004). Recent testing has confirmed that the current outbreak is caused by a new strain of Canine Influenza (H3N2) to North America, and it has only previously been found in Asia. There is currently a vaccine available for Canine Influenza H3N8, but there is no vaccine available for this new strain of H3N2 Influenza. It is unknown if the H3N8 vaccine will provide any protection against the H3N2 strain. There have not yet been any reported cases of this new strain of Canine Influenza locally in the Brainerd Lakes region or in the state of Minnesota. At this point, we are not currently recommending the Canine Influenza H3N8 vaccine due to minimal local concern for this strain and because it is unknown if this vaccine will afford any protection against the H3N2 strain. If you are planning to travel with your pet to the Chicago area, please give us a call to discuss your pet's risk potential . For more information, please visit the following website: <https://www.avma.org/KB/Resources/Reference/Pages/Canine-Influenza-Backgrounder.aspx>