



Canine Distemper

Adopters should be aware of cases of distemper virus infection in some dogs at Montgomery County Animal Shelter. Please read the following information on Canine Distemper Virus.

What is distemper?

Distemper is a viral disease that primarily affects the lungs, intestinal tract, and nervous system of dogs. The virus is contagious and is passed directly from dog to dog by close contact.

What are the clinical signs?

As with many infections, symptoms can vary from one dog to another. The most common symptoms are diarrhea, poor appetite, a thick yellow discharge from the eyes and nose, cough, and eventually neurological signs such as muscle twitching and seizures.

Who is at risk?

Young, old, or unvaccinated dogs are at greatest risk of becoming infected.

How common is distemper?

Distemper is a worldwide disease. Stray dogs and wildlife such as raccoons and skunks can be a source of the virus. Fortunately, vaccines have been highly effective in reducing this disease in dogs.

Are my pets at home safe?

It is recommended that all canine pets at home be greater than 6 months of age and fully vaccinated prior to adopting animals from the shelter. Canine distemper virus is not contagious to cats.