

What should I do if I suspect there is canine brucellosis in my kennel?

The first thing to do is consult with your veterinarian. If you have any infertility problems with male or female dogs these dogs should be tested. If any female dog aborts she should be tested. This disease spreads very rapidly from dog to dog without breeding once it is in a kennel. If you suspect a problem may exist it should be dealt with quickly.

What about treatment of infected dogs?

The result of treatment of dogs with canine brucellosis has been mixed. Research has proved that many infected dogs treated with antibiotics will seem to benefit in the short term, only to have the infection recur at a later time. In a breeding kennel it is recommended that any test positive dogs be euthanized. For a privately owned pet, neutering and a long course of antibiotics may reduce but not eliminate the risk of the spread of infection.

Can canine brucellosis infect people?

Canine brucellosis is a zoonotic disease, meaning it can be spread from dogs to people. This disease can be transmitted when we come in contact with the *B. canis* bacteria. The bacteria are shed

Canine Brucellosis

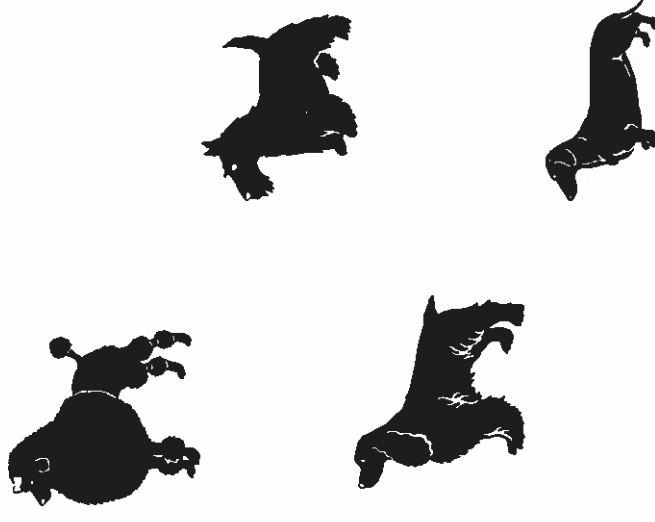
from infected dogs in bodily discharges, such as urine, uterine discharges, and semen. Care should be taken to prevent exposure to the *B. canis* bacteria. This can be accomplished through common hygiene, hand washing, not eating while handling dogs, and wearing protective gloves while cleaning contaminated areas. In humans the signs of *B. canis* infection are similar to flu-like symptoms varied from mild to severe. Humans are a dead end host in *B. canis* infection, meaning they do not shed the organism.

What will happen if canine brucellosis is diagnosed in my kennel?

When the presence of *B. canis* infection has been confirmed, the affected kennel is quarantined to prevent any further spread of the disease. All dogs within the kennel are then tested for canine brucellosis. The dogs that test positive are removed from the kennel. The remaining dogs are tested every 30 days. The quarantine is lifted when the entire kennel tests negative for two consecutive tests.

If you have further questions contact:

Department of Agriculture
Division of Animal Industry
700 Kipling Street Suite # 4000
Lakewood, CO 80215-5894
Ph# 303-239-4161



Colorado Department of Agriculture
Division of Animal Industry
700 Kipling Street Suite #4000
Lakewood, Colorado 80215-5894

What is canine brucellosis?

Canine Brucellosis is a contagious disease of dogs, characterized by infertility in males and females as well as abortions in female dogs.

What causes canine brucellosis?

Canine brucellosis is caused by the bacterial organism *Brucella canis*. *Brucella canis* does not appear to infect other animals, although dogs have been infected with *B. abortus* (cattle), *B. melitensis* (goats), and *B. suis* (swine), but these sporadic occurrences are usually associated with contact from infected livestock. Man is considered to be susceptible to all types of *Brucella* bacteria.

What are the symptoms of canine brucellosis?

Many dogs that are infected fail to show clinical signs or the symptoms are vague. **Infertility is the hallmark of *B. canis* infection in the male and female dog.** In males the infertility is usually not reversible. In the female abortions may occur at 6-8 weeks of gestation.

How can canine brucellosis be detected?

This disease can be detected by a blood test or through culturing the bacteria. The blood tests will detect the presence of antibodies in the blood of infected

dogs. These antibodies are produced in response to the *Brucella canis* bacteria. The bacteria can be cultured from blood, uterine fluids, or semen.

What laboratory tests are available to test my dogs?

There is a commercially available test, the *Symbiotics D-Tec CB*, which your veterinarian can use as a screening test. There are several other tests available through different laboratories that are used to detect antibodies produced in response to the *Brucella* bacteria. The Tube Agglutination Test (TAT) is presently being used by the State Veterinarian's Office. All positive tests are reported to the State Veterinarian's Office, whether they are performed by your veterinarian or sent out to a laboratory.

How is canine brucellosis transmitted?

The *Brucella* bacteria can infect by venereal contact, oral ingestion, or through a break in the skin. This disease is usually introduced into a kennel through breeding with an infected male or female dog or by purchasing a dog that is already infected. Once an infected dog is within the kennel the disease spreads throughout the kennel without breeding. One milliliter of a male dog's urine may contain one million *Brucella canis* bacteria. In female dogs uterine

fluids are teeming with *Brucella canis* bacteria. These bacteria can be infective when other dogs accidentally ingest them.

What can I do to prevent canine brucellosis infection in my dogs?

Canine brucellosis can be prevented from entering a kennel by using a bio-security program. This bio-security program should include:

- a. Do not introduce any new dogs into your kennel that have not tested negative to *B. canis*.
- b. Isolate all new dogs that have tested negative for 60 days and then retest. If these new dogs test negative a second time then they may be mingled with other dogs in the kennel.
- c. Do not breed any of your male or female dogs to other dogs outside of your kennel.
- d. If you do breed your dogs with other dogs outside your kennel require a negative *B. canis* test that has been performed 60 days after the last breeding of a previous dog. The time from exposure to *B. canis*, until the test will detect antibodies is about sixty days.
- e. Practice good sanitation and allow no unnecessary visitors in your kennel.