



FACTS ABOUT “PARVO”

- “Parvo” is short for the disease process caused by the canine parvovirus.
- The dogs most at risk are young puppies.
- How “Parvo” is transmitted:
 - Through direct or indirect contact with feces of an infected dog (dog to dog, contaminated human to dog, contaminated environment to dog).
 - The virus persists in the environment for a relatively long time (up to several months indoors and outside).
 - Common household cleaners are not necessarily effective to kill the virus. Bleach at 1:30 dilution will work on surfaces (NEVER attempt to give bleach to a dog or puppy by ANY route).
- If your dog or puppy develops “Parvo,” he could:
 - Become ill approximately 0.5 to 1.5 weeks after exposure.
 - Shed the virus before or after becoming obviously ill.
 - If not treated, die within two to three days of showing signs of illness.
- Signs of the disease include lethargy, lack of appetite, fever, vomiting, and diarrhea (often bloody).
- How “Parvo” develops in the body (pathogenesis):
 - The virus attacks through rapidly dividing cells, primarily in the intestinal lining and bone marrow.
 - Damage to the intestinal lining leads to fluid loss, electrolyte imbalances, and malnutrition.
 - Damage to the intestinal lining can allow gut bacteria to pass into the blood stream (sepsis).
 - Damage to the bone marrow causes low white blood cell counts.
 - A low white blood cell population leads to the inability of the immune system to fight infection.
 - Infected patients become seriously ill and could die from severe dehydration and/or septic shock.



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- How “Parvo” is diagnosed:
 - Primarily through fecal testing (in vet’s office).
 - Perhaps through blood testing (low white cell count, virus detection in blood).

- How “Parvo” is treated:
 - The virus itself is not treated. Infected dogs and puppies receive supportive care only.
 - Infected dogs and puppies are ISOLATED from other puppies or immunocompromised adult dogs (adults having conditions that can weaken their immune systems).
 - Infected dogs and puppies are given:
 - IV (intravenous) fluids with electrolytes.
 - Anti-nausea medications.
 - Anti-diarrheal medications.
 - Antibiotics to address secondary bacterial infection.
 - Nutritional support (such as liquid feeding via a feeding tube).

- “Parvo” can be prevented when you:
 - Are mindful that the puppy, kennel, and/or store are in good condition at the time of purchase or adoption.
 - Exercise caution if the puppy or his littermates seem ill.
 - Are careful to buy or adopt a puppy or dog from a sanitary housing situation.
 - Decrease the risk of exposure until the puppy is completely vaccinated:
 - Keep your puppy at home with adult dogs who have been vaccinated.
 - Avoid visiting the dog park, pet stores, and kennels.
 - Keep your dog ON LEASH. Do not allow off-leash access to other dogs’ feces.
 - VACCINATE your new puppy as the vet advises. This will likely be two to three vaccines administered every three to four weeks between the ages of six and 16 weeks. Booster vaccines might be required later in life.