



SASKATCHEWAN
SPCA

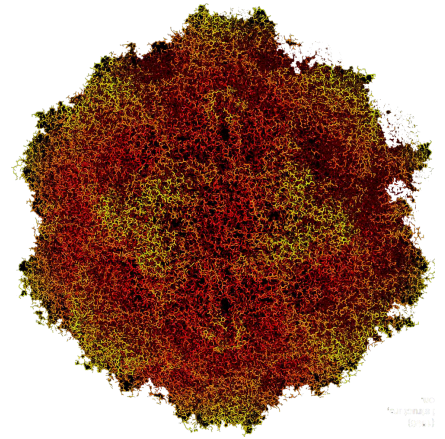
factsheet



PARVOVIRUS

WHAT IS PARVOVIRUS?

Parvovirus, commonly known as “Parvo,” is a highly contagious viral illness affecting dogs, particularly puppies. Parvovirus replicates aggressively in rapidly dividing cells. It is spread either by direct contact with an infected dog, by fecal-oral transmission, or by contact with objects or environments contaminated with the virus. The virus can survive in the environment for up to 10 months and is resistant to heat, cold, drying, and humidity. It is also resistant to many disinfectants.



WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF PARVOVIRUS?

Initially the symptoms of parvovirus are non-specific and include depression, lethargy, fever, and anorexia. Affected dogs show persistent vomiting and diarrhea (often bloody). This puts them at risk of developing severe dehydration and/or hypovolaemic shock (shock caused by decreased blood volume).

You should contact your veterinarian immediately if your dog shows any of the symptoms listed above.



CAN PARVOVIRUS BE TREATED?

There is no treatment that specifically targets the virus that causes parvo. Affected dogs receive aggressive supportive treatment primarily aimed at combating the dehydration that accompanies severe vomiting and diarrhea. Treatment includes intravenous (IV) fluids to replace lost fluid, protein, and electrolytes. It is also necessary to support the dog's immune system to prevent any secondary infections.

Parvovirus has a high mortality rate. Without treatment the mortality rate in puppies is around 90%. In older dogs mortality ranges from 16 – 48%. With timely and intensive in-hospital treatment the mortality rate can be reduced to 10%.

CAN PARVOVIRUS BE PREVENTED?

The best prevention against parvovirus is an appropriate vaccination program. Talk to your veterinarian about your dog's vaccination requirements.



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