

Fact Sheet

Kennel Cough



QUEENSLAND RACING
INTEGRITY COMMISSION

Kennel Cough is a highly contagious disease in dogs and is caused by a number of upper respiratory viruses (including canine parainfluenza) and bacteria (usually *Bordetella bronchiseptica*).

Kennel Cough is spread as droplets in the air from one coughing dog to a healthy dog.

When an infected dog coughs, the bacteria and viruses will usually die quickly in the air unless those droplets are inhaled by another dog in close proximity.

Once a greyhound has inhaled the infection, it usually takes between five and seven days for symptoms to begin.

It is important to note that even after the coughing has stopped and your greyhound appears well, they can remain infectious for up to three months.

The symptoms of Kennel Cough include:

- runny nose
- sneezing
- dry, hacking cough.

HOW LONG DOES KENNEL COUGH LAST?

Depending on the general health of your greyhound, the exact infectious agent(s) associated with the disease, and your greyhound's vaccination status, Kennel Cough can last from a few days to several weeks.

CAN KENNEL COUGH BE PREVENTED?

Annual vaccination against the *Bordetella bronchiseptica* bacteria and canine parainfluenza virus (part of the C5 vaccination) can prevent Kennel Cough outbreaks or at least help to reduce the incidence and/or severity of the disease in racing kennels. As described perviously, Kennel Cough is often caused by a combination of viruses and bacteria, although it is often the *Bordetella bronchiseptica* bacteria that causes the severe cough; and it is the coughing that spreads the disease.

VACCINATION IS IMPORTANT

Vaccination is especially important because dogs with Kennel Cough can continue to spread the disease for up to three months after their symptoms have disappeared. Kennel Cough vaccinations can be obtained through your veterinarian in injectable, intra-nasal (nose) or oral forms.

The intra-nasal and oral vaccinations are more effective in preventing the spread of Kennel Cough, as they usually act more rapidly than the injection. This is because the intra-nasal and oral vaccines act on the mucous membrane lining of the nasal and oral passages, preventing the viruses and bacteria from entering the animal.

MY GREYHOUND HAS KENNEL COUGH - WHAT DO I DO?

At the first sign of Kennel Cough, the sick greyhound should be immediately isolated from all other dogs on your property and your veterinarian contacted. Your veterinarian will provide you with information about treatment options, quarantine and vaccination options for that greyhound and any other dogs on your property. The kennel area where your sick greyhound was being kept should be completely disinfected with hospital grade disinfectant.

Remember, the disease travels from dog to dog through droplets in the air, so the whole kennel facility should be disinfected and all bedding, drinking and feeding utensils, and lures washed in hot, soapy water.

Scrubbing is important to breakdown the surface of the infection droplets and prevent spread.

Any outdoor housing (e.g., undercover kennel areas in day yards and so on, should also be disinfected.

In addition, ventilating your kennel building (opening doors at either end to allow fresh air in) will also help reduce disease spread.