

Transport Team--Infectious Disease Transmissibility and Prevention

Canine Distemper Virus (CDV)--Regardless of whether an affected distemper case appears in your own home or in your vehicle, it is important that correct hygiene measures are taken to clean and disinfect the contaminated areas. Fortunately, distemper is really easy to kill and there are many ways (both chemical and physical) to remove the organism from surfaces and fomites (feed bowls, water dishes) in order to prevent the disease from spreading. Quaternary ammonium compounds (also termed cationic disinfectants or cationic surfactants) are probably the most common disinfectant substances used by most households today. They are readily available and work well in the killing of CDV. A lot of the detergents used to wash clothes (e.g. fabric softeners and washing powders/liquids) are quaternary ammonium compounds: they should be fine to remove CDV from clothing and bedding. For those of you looking for effective, biodegradable, non-toxic chemicals effective against CDV, there is a new compound put out by the NutriBiotic company called Citricidal. This is a natural diphenol derived from grapefruit seed. Steam cleaning is also an option. Enveloped viruses such as distemper are not resistant to intense heat and pressure. Steam cleaning will kill CDV and even parvo virus organisms and may be an option for carpets, clothing and bedding where other chemical compounds might not be appropriate. **The virus only lasts a short time in most environments with temperatures over 68 degrees Fahrenheit and it is very susceptible to most household disinfectants and chemicals.**

Your dog(s) will not be in any danger if they are current on vaccinations. Unvaccinated dogs may be at risk. Do NOT transport unvaccinated dogs in an exposed vehicle for one month.

Parvovirus (Parvo)--The Parvovirus family of viruses are particularly long-lived in the environment, lasting anywhere from 1 to 7 months -- commonly surviving 5-7 months in an outside environment. Due to the large amounts of virus particles shed in the feces of an infected dog (shedding lasts two weeks or more after exposure) and the longevity of the virus, complete eradication of the virus is often difficult. There are many Parvovirus disinfectants on the market, but regular old bleach is still 100% effective against Parvovirus. The dilution for bleach is one part bleach to 30 parts water. Caution is advised for dyed or colored fabrics or objects. If you have any other animals...if they are adults and have been vaccinated they should be fine. If you have any other pups or kittens they need to be completely separated from all areas the infected pup was in contact with. Remember, shoes and anything else that came in contact with the areas can spread the virus. So basically try to think of everything you can and clean with bleach.

Your dog(s) will not be in any danger if they are current on vaccinations. Unvaccinated dogs are at risk. Do NOT transport unvaccinated dogs in an exposed vehicle for a period of one year.

Fecal Parasites (Giardia, Hookworm, Roundworm, etc.)--Intestinal parasites (worms and protozoans) are common in animal shelters in the U.S. and often cause illness in the animals they infect. Diarrhea is most common, but anemia, coughing and even death can occur. On the other hand, many parasites may cause infections but animals may show no clinical signs. This means that some animals that appear perfectly healthy may be causing spread of infections and environmental contamination. Several intestinal parasites of dogs & cats are zoonotic – that is, they can also cause disease in human beings, including shelter staff, adopters, or even just members of the general public who visit animal shelters. The eggs or cysts of some parasites are very resistant to disinfection and will persist in the environment for a very long time. Examples of these are roundworms and coccidia. Other parasites, such as Giardia and Tritrichomonas, are quite fragile in the environment and are easily destroyed by most disinfectants as well as by drying. Sweep every area of your car to remove debris and hair that may be contaminated with Giardia cysts. Make sure no fecal matter remains in any area. Scrub washable areas with a solution of one part bleach to 16 parts water. Leave it on for several minutes and then rinse well. Wash your hands thoroughly after disinfecting or handling sick dogs.

Your dog(s) may be susceptible to infection unless you clean up very well. To be safe, keep dogs out for at least two weeks.