

Leptospirosis

Leptospirosis is a disease caused by a bacteria found in soil and water. Slow-moving and stagnant water are major risk factors for leptospirosis. Infection can occur when a dog's mucous membrane or open wound comes into contact with infected urine, urine-contaminated soil or other items, or through a bite of an infected animal. It can also be spread from a mother dog to puppies.

Is My Pet at Risk?

Dogs are most commonly at risk for this disease. Risk factors include:

- Drinking from rivers, lakes, streams
- Exposure to wild animals and livestock
- Contact with rodents or infected dogs
- Roaming on rural property

Am I at Risk?

Leptospirosis is a zoonotic disease, meaning it can be spread from an infected animal to a human being. Infection causes symptoms similar to flue and can lead to liver and kidney disease. Most human infection is the result of exposure to water containing the bacteria, usually during recreational activities.

How Can I Prevent Leptospirosis?

Have your dog vaccinated annually against this disease. Talk to your veterinarian about the leptospirosis vaccination, your pet's individual risks and concerns. You can also reduce the risk of you or your pet contracting this disease by following some basic precautions:

- Avoid letting your dog drink from rivers, lakes, ponds, or stagnant water, and avoid letting your dog swim in these same waters
- Avoid contact with your dog's urine. Wear gloves when cleaning urine, and disinfect any areas where your dog urinates in the home.
- Wash your hands after handling your pet.