



Waggin' Tails Pet Ranch- Where Pets Come to Play!

Canine Influenza and our Area: What You Need to Know.

by: Denise Einkauf- owner/operator

What is Canine Influenza (H3N2)? You may have heard that a new outbreak of Canine Influenza has made it to our area. This strain is the **H3N2** which is different than the H3N8 strain that made it to Texas a few years ago. This outbreak of the flu originated in several dog shows in Florida and Georgia, and now there have been many confirmed cases throughout the Greater Houston area. This strain, like most flu viruses, is highly contagious and easily spread through air. The symptoms of the H3N2 include: fever (can be high), coughing, lethargy and other upper-respiratory symptoms. No drugs are effective in treating this flu, but supportive care for the symptoms are important. This flu can last 21-28 days and some dogs only show minor or no symptoms, but can still spread it. There has been no human transmission reported.

What do dog owners need to do? All dog owners should begin by speaking to their veterinarian about vaccinating for the H3N2. The vaccination does NOT prevent the flu virus from infecting the dog, but it does reduce the clinical signs and shortens the duration of illness if the dog becomes infected. The H3N2 vaccination is given in a two part series at least two weeks apart. If you are planning to have your dog in a higher risk environment like boarding, daycamp, grooming, or a dog show within the next month, I would suggest starting the series to build maximum immunity before you take your dog. I would also minimize unnecessary trips to places like dog parks or pet stores, where high congregations of dogs go without verified vaccinations. If your pet exhibits any symptoms of the flu, contact your veterinarian as soon as possible. Also, if your dog does become infected with the flu, keep them away from all other dogs and dog environments for at least 3-4 weeks.

We are all in this together. It is important to remember that this is a new event for our community as we have not seen outbreaks like H3N2 during recent years. There are now at least 5 confirmed cases in our area and more are being tested every day. Waggin' Tails Pet Ranch will continue to share any updates we receive from local veterinarians as well as from Texas A&M. I believe educating the public is key and an important part of my job as a kennel owner and community member. Waggin' Tails Pet Ranch will also continue to be diligent in our staff training, disinfecting and vaccine protocol.

Denise Einkauf is the owner/operator of Waggin' Tails Pet Ranch in Fulshear, Tx. Waggin' Tails is one of the largest Pet Resorts in the greater Houston area with 6500 sq ft on 15 acres and has is in its 12th year of operation. Denise has a BS in Animal Science and a BS in Biomedical Science from Texas A&M. She has been in the animal industry for over 25 years.