

Recently, we at Hendricks Veterinary Hospital been receiving questions about the “dog flu,” or Canine Influenza Virus (CIV). Pet owners are concerned about stories they have seen or read in the news about outbreaks. While answering their questions we realized that you may have similar questions and concerns.

- **WHAT IS IT?** CIV is a relatively new disease and can be caused by two different canine influenza virus strains, H3N8 and H3N2. Both strains of CIV virus cause respiratory disease in dogs. One or both strains have been found in 46 states, and recently in the Boise area. Affected dogs may develop coughing, nasal discharge, fever, lethargy, and loss of appetite. With proper medical attention, most dogs will recover. However, in some cases, CIV can progress to a more severe or even life-threatening conditions.
- **WHO IS AT RISK?** CIV is highly contagious, so visiting places where dogs socialize or congregate, such as boarding facilities, doggie day cares, dog parks, groomers, or dog shows will place dogs at higher risk. Dogs can spread the virus before obvious signs of illness appear, making the situation even more difficult to control. Although CIV is usually found in dogs it can cause cats to become ill as well.
- **HOW DO I PROTECT MY PETS?** The best way is through vaccination. Fortunately, there is a vaccine now available for both CIV strains for canines. The initial vaccination requires two doses, given 14-28 days apart. Thereafter, an annual booster is recommended for continued protection. It is important to isolate any pets who are showing signs of CIV from other animals until they can be seen by a veterinarian. There is currently no vaccine available for our feline friends, however, the frequency of infection is much lower in cats.

It is important to be aware that a previously unvaccinated dog receiving its first CIV vaccine will NOT be protected until 14 days after the booster vaccines is administered (a minimum of 28 days after the initial vaccine). Also, some local boarding and daycare facilities are now requiring this vaccine due to the increased risk.

Due to the arrival of CIV to Boise we anticipate seeing the majority of our canine patients for this vaccination. If your dog has been examined by one of our veterinarians within the last 6 months you can schedule an appointment to have the vaccine administered without another office visit fee until August of 2018 (schedule an appointment here: <http://vet.lc/8o7b45>). If we have not had the opportunity to examine your pet they will need to see our veterinarian in order to receive the vaccine (schedule an appointment here: <http://vet.lc/p2nn13>). Please contact us at (208) 853-0640 to make an appointment for your pet today.

If your pet is showing signs of CIV it is very important they be seen by a veterinarian, please call us for an appointment immediately. We require any pet who is showing symptoms to remain in a vehicle as to not spread the disease to unvaccinated patients. Please help us keep Boise’s pet community happy and healthy!

Sincerely,

Dr. Joel Davis, DVM & Dr. Tad Squires, DVM