

Parvo – Never give up!

Whether you are breeding dogs or rescuing them, Parvovirus is always talked about because of the impact of the virus on our puppies' health. If they contract the disease, it can be weeks before the puppy has recovered enough to move to a new home. Parvo causes more dollar loss than any other disease in kennels and rescues.

Parvovirus enteritis starts abruptly with anorexia and depression. It quickly progresses to vomiting and then diarrhea, if they do not die before that point. If a puppy is vomiting hard, it will often have little diarrhea until later in the course of the disease. Any dog with depression and GI signs should be considered to have Parvo, until it is proven to be something else. Delay in treatment results in death.

In 2006, Oklahoma State diagnosed Parvovirus 2c in the United States. The 2c strain is very aggressive, leaving puppies so extremely sick that they often don't want to raise their head, or just die quickly with few signs. As one breeder put it, the puppies have the "want to die" look that reminds you of the original Parvo. 2C Parvo is very quick incubation with exposure to clinical signs as quick as 3-4 days.



Where did we get Parvo:

The original Parvo crossed from cat Panleukopenia (a Parvo virus) and affected the gut of dogs. We had Parvo in dogs that caused little issues so this new diarrhea Parvo was named Parvo 2, affecting only dogs. The newer strains of Parvo, including 2A & B, reproduced in wildlife and cats, but still preferred canines. 2c Parvo will readily go back and forth to wildlife and cats where it reproduces and spreads. That gives the new strains a competitive advantage and keeps the wild virus in the environment.

Vaccine Timing is Critical!

You can't avoid Parvo in the kennel. You can keep the immunity higher than the wild virus and avoid seeing the disease! You do that with vaccine timing and keeping the wild virus low with disinfection. Your goal is protection from puppy loss.

- Evaluate the Parvo vaccine and disinfection protocol you are using and decide if you are positioned to prevent all Parvo strains.
- Start vaccination early and be sure to give two [Parvo vaccines](#), two weeks apart, one week before your puppies leave the kennel.
- Rescue and humane kennels should strive to get Parvo and distemper in the dog before they breathe the kennel air. Timing is that important!
- Keep your cats vaccinated in the kennel and avoid the issue. If the cat is vaccinated for feline distemper, Panleukopenia, they cannot get Canine Parvovirus.

Disinfect for Success!

Disinfectant contact time to kill the virus is important – some are 20 minutes and not practical. Trifectant®, Virkon, and OXINE® work in seconds. Bleach should not be used around puppies, as it is one that was implicated in Fading Puppy Syndrome along with the Quaternary ammonia family of disinfectants (Roccal). Puppy's skin is translucent and they absorb disinfectant quickly and can become toxic – they fade out.

- [Trifectant®](#) or [Virkon](#) – same thing. They penetrate organic matter and get the virus. This is the one often used to spray gravel runs once a week.
- [OXINE®](#) is excellent as well and penetrates. You have to mix two products together and that is one extra step. OXINE is used in the food industry. Fog with OXINE in pet shops targeting respiratory viruses. – Fogging is an excellent tool for managing a kennel cough outbreak!
- **Bleach** is excellent, but you have to be an excellent cleaner as it will not penetrate. If you have smeared diarrhea or virus under smeared oil (Puppy food is high fat), Bleach will sterilize the surface but not the virus under it.
- Use [Health Guard™](#) in the laundry to protect the washer, yet get the Parvo virus out of towels.

Treatment:

If they get Parvo, the puppy dehydrates quickly. They are very painful from cramping and because Parvo wipes out the lining of the gut, many bacteria are absorbed. White Blood Cell numbers are suppressed so they have little fight as well. The treatment is straight forward.

- Fluids and lots of them. We like Saline and add 50 cc of [50% Dextrose](#) to get a 5% Dextrose solution. You will keep the glucose up and hydrate. Start with 5 ml/pound/twice a day and add any time you see diarrhea stool. Don't forget to add the diarrhea loss on top of the 5 ml/lb – most forget this one. 2 Tablespoons of diarrhea needs 30 cc of fluid to replace.
- Antibiotic to handle the absorbed bacteria and immune suppression. Tylosin is preferred as it is effective and helps with the cramping. *Don't use Lincocin or Gentocin in babies that are dehydrated or you will damage the kidneys!*
- Slow and stop the vomiting. Reglan is preferred here, but several other products are also effective.
- Early feeding is very helpful in the recovery. As soon as puppies can handle it, start them on high fat/Protein food. Do not use high carbohydrates or you get Clostridium overgrowth and sudden death. Many use all meat baby food or Royal Canine Recovery diet.

Keep them comfortable, disinfect around them, and provide lots of paper to remove any diarrhea stool when it happens.

Never Give Up :

When Parvo happens you have to get aggressive as there are now millions of Parvo virus in the kennel.

- Disinfect with [Trifectant®](#) or [OXINE®](#) – they penetrate cracks and kill the virus. Use [Health Guard™](#) in laundry.
- Move vaccine to 4-6-8 weeks starting with Parvo only vaccine at 4-6 weeks.
- Every litter over 4 weeks and over 1 lb should be vaccinated immediately and booster given in two weeks.
- Put oral electrolytes ([RE-SORB®](#)) in front of all puppies from weaning to 8 weeks. Do this for all puppies for 30 days.

Re-evaluate every week and stay aggressive for 90 days. It takes 90 days to feel comfortable the Parvo is under control

Stay aggressive with your vaccine program! Keep wild virus numbers low, immunity high in your kennel, and never give Parvo a place to live!

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