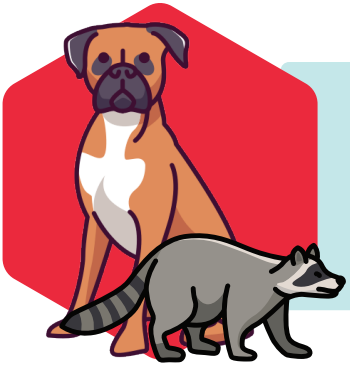


What dog owners need to know about Canine Distemper

City of Austin Animal Services has seen an increase in dogs with distemper. This highly contagious and often fatal viral disease is preventable.



Canine distemper affects domestic dogs and ferrets, and can infect wildlife (including raccoons, coyotes, foxes, and skunks). It is caused by canine distemper virus (CDV).

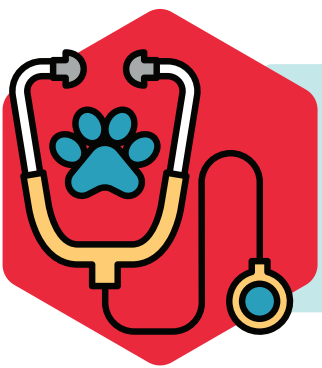
The virus is spread through close contact with infected animals, most commonly from **respiratory droplets** and less commonly from urine or feces. The virus does not survive well in the environment, but there is still potential risk of spread via contaminated items like bowls and toys.

Early Signs 1-2 weeks after infection

- Fever, lethargy, decreased appetite
- Eye or nose discharge (thick and yellow)
- Coughing, sneezing, difficulty breathing
- Vomiting, diarrhea

Delayed Signs 1-3 weeks after recovery from early signs

- Neurological signs: seizures, circling, muscle twitching, paralysis
- Thickening and hardening of paw pads and nose
- Damaged tooth enamel



Supportive care is used to treat dogs and puppies with distemper to manage dehydration, gastrointestinal issues, or neurological signs. Prevention is key.



Vaccinations are safe and highly effective against CDV. Make sure your dog is fully vaccinated. Talk to your veterinarian about vaccination schedules.

Prevent contact of unvaccinated or incompletely vaccinated dogs with other dogs, especially at dog parks where there are many dogs of unknown vaccine status. Do not allow dogs to share water bowls with dogs outside your home.

Due to the extreme heat, wildlife are looking for water sources. Remove or disinfect any outdoor water bowls and dispose of any standing water.

