ANIMAL HEALTH ADVISORY

_Campylobacter_ Infection in Dogs

(14 March 2018)

Puppies and dogs can carry _Campylobacter_, a bacteria that can make people sick. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently concluded a year-long investigation into a multi-state outbreak of multidrug-resistant _Campylobacter jejuni_ infections in humans who had contact with infected puppies sold at a major pet store chain.

The Indiana State Board of Animal Health (BOAH) encourages commercial dog breeders and brokers, pet owners, and veterinarians to be on the lookout for signs of _Campylobacter_ infection in dogs and take steps to prevent the spread of infection in other dogs as well as humans.

**Signs**

In canines, _Campylobacter_ bacteria may cause diarrhea (sometimes with mucus and blood), reduced appetite, fever, and occasional vomiting. Stress events, such as transportation, may cause an apparently normal puppy or dog carrying the bacteria to start showing clinical signs. Some dogs may have the bacteria but not show clinical signs.

**Testing**

A licensed veterinarian may perform a fecal smear to screen for _Campylobacter_-like organisms. Veterinarians may also send a stool sample to a veterinary diagnostic laboratory for confirmation of _Campylobacter_ bacteria.

**Sanitation & Prevention**

The disease can be easily transmitted through animal feces. To prevent spread, isolate ill dogs and clean and disinfect surroundings thoroughly. Handlers/caretakers should thoroughly wash their hands with soap and water after handling dogs, pet food, and after touching/cleaning the dogs’ environment.

**Treatment**

Dogs usually recover from _Campylobacter_ infections with supportive care. The choice of antibiotic for treatment should be guided by laboratory culture results, since some _Campylobacter_ bacteria strains are resistant to one or more drugs. If Campylobacter is diagnosed the dog owner should work with his or her veterinarian to develop a treatment and control plan.

**Information**

Information about the recent CDC investigation is available at: [www.cdc.gov/campylobacter/outbreaks/puppies-9-17/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/campylobacter/outbreaks/puppies-9-17/index.html)

Information for commercial dog breeders is available online at: [www.in.gov/boah/2549.htm](http://www.in.gov/boah/2549.htm)

Contact BOAH with questions at: 877-747-3038 or animalhealth@boah.in.gov

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