Infectious Tracheobronchitis in Dogs
(Kennel Cough)

General Information

Infectious Tracheobronchitis is a contagious disease of the upper respiratory tract, which included the trachea (windpipe) and bronchi (large air passages of the lungs). Viruses and bacteria are usually involved.

The most common sign of kennel cough is a harsh, dry cough that is often followed by gagging and coughing up foamy mucous. Otherwise, the patient appears alert and generally healthy. The disease is airborne and spreads, rapidly from one dog to another, but does not affect people or cats.

Important Points in Treatment

1. The disease is self-limiting. This means that unless complications (such as pneumonia) occur, the signs usually disappear in 1 to 3 weeks. Antibiotics and/or supportive treatment may be needed.
2. Ordinarily, no special diet is required but adopters should monitor eating habits to be sure your dog or puppy is eating and drinking normally.
3. Exercise stimulates coughing and should be severely restricted. Sudden changes in air temperature or pressure on the neck from collars and leashes may also stimulate coughing.
4. Give all medication as directed. Call your veterinarian if you cannot give the medication.
5. Dogs with kennel cough should be kept isolated from other dogs to prevent transmission.
6. Remember to wash your hands after giving medications and any handling of the dog.

Notify your veterinarian if any of the following occur:

- Your dog's cough persists or worsens.
- Your dog becomes depressed.
- Your dog stops eating
- Your dog develops a nasal discharge