

Pawsitive Press

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Parvo Video

What is parvo?

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I can still remember the first case of parvo virus that I ever saw. Unfortunately it was only a necropsy sample of a dog’s small intestine in to take back to the University of Florida for evaluation for parvo. I was working in Branford Florida as a veterinary technician the year before I started veterinary school in 1980 and dogs were dying of a new disease in the area and we needed help in solving the dilemma. These dogs would start to become depressed, most would vomit and all of them had severe diarrhea with lots of blood in it. We did everything we knew how to do at that time to save them, but we couldn’t. It was a severe time for us because we really had nothing to offer the owners as their pet died from dehydration, despite having intravenous fluids given to them.

Vaccine companies had been working on a cure for some time before the outbreak, and the next year the veterinary profession had a new weapon to fight parvo. It was a night and day difference when we were able to vaccinate puppies for this disease. When the disease first started no pets had any immunity to it so very few actually lived to pass the antibodies on to their young. Now with the aid of vaccines, female dogs had antibodies to the disease and can pass them on through their colostrum, which is in the first 24 to 48 hours that the puppies nurse.

Why is Parvo so bad in dogs?

Pets need to have a certain amount of hydration for the body to work properly. They

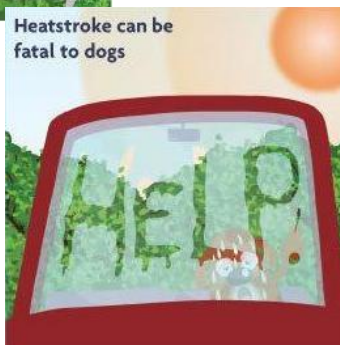
get water, electrolytes, minerals, carbohydrate, fat and protein form whatever they eat and drink. The bowel has billions of “villi” that form the lining of the bowel and that is where water and nutrients are absorbed. The parvo virus actually enters the villi to replicate and this process causes the villi to die very quickly. With other viral diseases the same thing happens, but the reason parvo is so severe is that it kills the whole villi and not just part of it. It leaves the bowel unable to digest or absorb almost anything. Even if the pet eats or drinks something it passes right through the bowel undigested and unabsorbed. The villi will regenerate but it takes many days for that to happen so the pet is at major risk of dying during that time.

What can I do to protect my pet?

When you buy a puppy make sure that the mother was vaccinated before she was bred,

Parvo Continued

this will help protect the puppy when it is very young. As they grow they need to develop their own antibodies to protect them. Puppies should be vaccinated at least twice and the second vaccine needs to be at 16 weeks of age or older. Our standard puppy vaccine schedule is to vaccinate them for parvo at 6 weeks, 9 weeks, 12 weeks and 16 weeks to do everything possible for them not to get this life threatening disease.



Can I bunk at your pad for a bit?

Not quite ready to make a long term commitment with adoption? Do you have room in your home, heart, and life for a furry companion? Become a foster parent! Foster care programs give animals that are not yet ready for adoption a chance to live and be loved in foster homes. Through this exciting partnership between rescue groups and volunteers, many organizations are able to:

- Reduce the amount of time an animal lives in a shelter
- Accept more animals into their rescue group
- Increase adoptions by better preparing animals to become beloved family members

By becoming a volunteer foster caregiver to animals, you'll get the chance to spend quality time with some tiny kittens, teach a dog how to love and be loved, or watch an injured kitty get back on her feet thanks to your care and attention. It's an immensely rewarding experience you'll never forget, and it saves animals' lives in a very direct way.

Which four-legged friends do are sent home with foster caregivers? Foster candidates are animals who aren't quite ready for adoption—usually mothers with newborn litters, young kittens and puppies, and recovering sick or injured animals. Some simply need an attentive foster caregiver to help socialize them so they're completely ready to be successful family members.

The reasons for sending animals to foster are varied. Sometimes shelters receive animals that are not medically healthy enough for adoption, but still have the right to live out their golden years in loving homes and with proper medical treatment.

Most rescue group provide foster caregivers with all the food and supplies they need to take care of their foster animals, and cover all medical expenses for foster animals, including medication.

You need only provide your home—and attention and love for your foster animals!

Here are some local shelters and rescue groups that could use your help!

- Humane Society of Pinellas - (727) 797-7722
- Dunedin Doggie Rescue - www.dunedindogs.com
- Suncoast Animal League – (727) 786-1333
- All Dog Rescue of Florida – clearjill@aol.com
- SPCA Tampabay - (727) 586-3591
- Friends of Strays – (727) 522-6566



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