



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES-DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
VETERINARY PUBLIC HEALTH-RABIES CONTROL PROGRAM
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Animal Health Alert - October 18, 2005

Canine Influenza Update.

So far, Veterinary Public Health has received reports of 5 dogs testing positive by serology for canine influenza in Los Angeles County. Cornell University's Animal Health Diagnostic Center reports that they have tested 80 dogs from California, of which 14 had positive titers.

The 5 locally reported cases include the previously reported 4 dogs who had been at the same kennel in August, diagnosed by Dr. Jon Bernstein in Inglewood. Another dog was reported to have a positive titer by Pet Medical Center in Santa Monica. The titer was fairly low (1:32), despite the serum sample being taken about two weeks after the onset of illness. A second serum sample will be submitted to determine if the exposure was recent.

Veterinary Public Health has facilitated the testing of over 50 dogs. So far we have received results on 10 virus isolation swabs and 18 serum samples, with many more pending. All test results thus far have been negative. We strongly encourage continued testing, which is done at no charge to the practitioner when submitted through our department. Canine influenza, like any unusual disease outbreak, is considered reportable in Los Angeles County.

Currently, serum and tissue collected at necropsy may be submitted for testing. In certain circumstances, we may pay for a complete necropsy. Be sure your client knows that the turnaround time on the serum test has been around 3-4 weeks. For necropsy specimens, fresh (not frozen or fixed) lung and tracheal tissue are required. Please call our office ASAP (323-730-3723) to arrange prompt pickup and processing. The finding of hemorrhagic pneumonia increases the suspicion of canine influenza greatly.

Swabs will no longer be accepted for testing. Swabs for virus isolation have been unsuccessful nationwide thus far. The virus has only been successfully isolated from fresh (not fixed or frozen) lung and tracheal tissues.

Report your cases to Veterinary Public Health. Please fill out the standard 2-page animal disease report form, as well as the 1-page Canine Influenza Supplemental information report form. Fax in the filled-out report forms and call us to report the case.