



Brucella canis (B. canis) infection: Prevention and Control

Veterinarians must report all cases of *B. canis* infections to State Veterinarian's Office at the Department of Livestock (DOL). Humane euthanasia of *B. canis* infected dogs is recommended because the disease is not curable, the disease is not benign, and there is risk of transmission to humans and other dogs, even in spayed and neutered animals.

Prevention and control recommendations:

- Dogs infected with *B. canis* should be spayed/neutered to reduce the chance of transmission of disease.
- Dogs infected with *B. canis* should not breed or have contact with breeding dogs.
- Avoid direct or mucus membrane contact with bodily fluids (e.g., urine, feces, vomit, saliva, blood, wound drainage, reproductive fluids) from infected dogs. If contact does occur, wash with soap and water, and consult with your primary care physician.
- Always wear disposable gloves when cleaning up bodily fluids (e.g., urine, vomit, and feces).
- *B. canis* is relatively short-lived outside the body and is readily inactivated by common disinfectants as well as by sunlight.
 - However, *B. canis* is stable in the environment in the presence of organic debris for up to two months. *B. canis* can withstand drying in the presence of organic debris, can withstand freezing, and can survive in water, dust, and soil. The combination of organic debris, high humidity, low temperatures and little or no sunlight favors survival of the bacteria.
 - Disinfectant is required to remain wet on the surface for the required contact time to be effective against the bacteria.
- Avoid taking infected dog to public areas where he/she would have significant contact with other dogs (e.g., dog parks, dog-grooming facilities, doggie day care or boarding facilities, walking trails, etc.)
- Do not allow young children, pregnant women, or individuals with compromised immune systems or artificial heart valves to have direct contact with the infected dog or his/her bodily fluids.
- Always alert veterinary clinics of the dog's *B. canis* infection prior to taking him/her for veterinary care, so that the staff may take precautions to protect themselves from becoming infected.
- Follow your veterinarian's advice about periodic testing and long-term antibiotic therapy.
- Do not sell or give your dog away without first notifying the new owner about the *B. canis* diagnosis and providing these disease prevention guidelines to the new owner.
- If you are concerned about your health, see your health care provider, and inform them that your dog has canine brucellosis.

We understand that this is a difficult situation for you because your dog is a loved family member. If you have any questions or concerns about fulfilling these responsibilities, please call your state veterinarian or local health department.

More information for veterinarians/dog caretakers can be found in: Best Practices for *Brucella canis* Prevention and Control in Dog Breeding Facilities. USDA. 2015.

Please contact Montana Department of Livestock at 406-444-2976 for more information.