



**Montana Veterinary Medical Association  
2022 Summer Meeting  
Resolution regarding Brucella canis**

Based upon the recent increase in diagnosis of Brucella canis in dogs rescued from Northeast Montana and adopted through Montana shelters, the Department of Livestock recommends that the following dogs be screened for B. canis:

1. Symptomatic dogs-reproductive abnormalities, generalized pain that can't be localized, lameness, back or neck pain, uveitis
2. Dogs from high-risk areas- Currently designated as Valley and Roosevelt Counties (west of Hwy 251). Including asymptomatic dogs.
3. Pregnant dogs (with an unknown breeding history).

Because of the following concerns, the MVMA supports this recommendation and encourages veterinarians, dog breeders, and shelters to comply with this recommendation:

1. B. canis is a zoonotic disease for which the human implications of infection are not well understood.
2. Spaying and neutering dogs does not eliminate the risk of disease transmission as the organism can be cultured in the urine of spayed/neutered animals.
3. B. canis infection can result in severe disease in dogs including chronic pain.
4. Treatment of B. canis is not considered curative.
5. B. canis positive dogs require life-long management and containment if not euthanized.
6. Treatment for B. canis requires medically important antibiotics.
7. For shelter animals, diagnosis of animals \*prior to adoption\* is important to prevent B. canis dogs from being adopted. This will prevent further potential zoonotic risk, risks for further transmission amongst our canine populations through exposure to positive dogs and prevent owners from developing a human animal bond with animals and then being put in a position to make hard decisions about euthanasia or long-term management of the animal.

The MVMA also encourages the Department of Livestock to develop specific criteria/thresholds for when at risk populations are included in testing recommendations, when recommendations can be lifted, and strategies to proactively reduce the incidence of disease in Montana canine populations instead of the current test and removal strategy.