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Alert: 2009 H1N1 influenza-infected dog in New York

December 22, 2009

On December 21, IDEXX Laboratories confirmed 2009 H1N1 influenza virus in a dog in Bedford Hills, New York. A 13-year old dog became ill after its owner was ill with confirmed 2009 H1N1 influenza. The dog was lethargic, coughing, not eating, and had a fever. Radiographs (x-rays) showed evidence of pneumonia. The dog was treated with intravenous fluids, antibiotics, nebulization and other supportive care, and was discharged from the hospital after 48 hours of care. It is currently recovering. Tests submitted to IDEXX Laboratories were negative for canine influenza (H3N8) but positive for 2009 H1N1 influenza. The results were confirmed by the Iowa State Laboratory.

At this time, the messages to clients remain largely the same.

- This is not cause for panic, but underscores the importance of taking pets to a veterinarian if they are showing signs of illness. This is especially important if someone in the household has recently been ill with flu-like symptoms.
- Pet owners should remain vigilant.
- To date, animals infected with the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus have shown the following clinical signs: lethargy, inappetance/anorexia, coughing and difficulty breathing. Some of the animals have developed pneumonia. Any animals showing these signs of disease should be examined by a veterinarian as soon as possible.
- Proper hygiene and sanitation measures should be followed to limit the spread of the influenza virus.
- There is no evidence to suggest that pets have or will spread the virus to humans or other animals. To date, all of the sick pets became ill after a person in the household was ill with flu-like symptoms.
- Proper hygiene and sanitation measures should be followed to limit the spread of the influenza virus.
- Turkey and pork are still safe to eat. Nonetheless, proper food hygiene and preparation are very important when it comes to protecting your family from any foodborne illness.

Source: AVMA

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