

## Solve the sick dog mystery and question its history: Canine Brucellosis

The Minnesota Board of Animal Health requires all canine brucellosis positive dogs to either be quarantined for life or euthanized to stop the spread of this highly contagious zoonotic disease. Veterinarians have a responsibility to suspect, detect and report cases of canine brucellosis to the Board. Keep in mind, most infected dogs appear outwardly normal and don't show signs of infection.

### How to spot a clinical dog:

- All dogs, including those that are spayed/neutered can exhibit the following signs:
  - Swollen lymph nodes.
  - Eye disease.
  - Infections of the spine causing intermittent back pain.
- Female dogs may experience aborted pregnancies, stillbirth, and inability to become pregnant. However, they may also deliver infected puppies.
- Males' primary symptom is the inability to sire puppies.

### Evaluating new patients:

- Ask new pet owners about health history and where they got their puppy.
- Ask about its movement history and known origins.
- Dogs with clinical signs or suspected cases should be tested.

### Existing patients:

Dogs with clinical signs or suspected cases should be tested.

### Testing protocols:

#### For dogs showing clinical signs:

- Start with an antibody screening test such as the Rapid Slide Agglutination Test (RSAT), which is good for average-risk dogs.
- Negative results can be trusted to be negative.
- False positives are common.
- Follow up with the Agar Gel Immunodiffusion (AGID) test to confirm any positive test results.

#### Screening dogs at higher risk of brucellosis is recommended:

- Perform multiple tests over a period of time.
- Testing dogs under 6 months of age is not recommended.
- Test at 6 months of age and then repeat again 12 weeks after the last known exposure.
- For someone who adopts a puppy at a higher risk of infection, test at 6 months and again at 1 year.

Veterinarians and clinics treating suspected brucellosis cases should take precautions to protect staff and other clients at the clinic. The Minnesota Department of Health has a handout to guide clinics through these risks:

[Canine Brucellosis Info for Veterinary Personnel \(https://www.bah.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/documents/Canine%20Brucellosis%20IPC%20Info%20For%20Veterinary%20Personnel.pdf\)](https://www.bah.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/documents/Canine%20Brucellosis%20IPC%20Info%20For%20Veterinary%20Personnel.pdf).

**Report confirmed or suspected canine brucellosis cases to the Minnesota Board of Animal Health's companion animal team at [companion.animal@state.mn.us](mailto:companion.animal@state.mn.us).**