

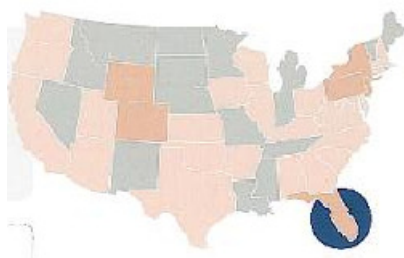
# Canine Influenza Update



Canine influenza, or [H3N8](#), is a relatively new and highly contagious virus that can resemble kennel cough, with symptoms that include cough, fever, runny nose, loss of appetite and low energy. Canine influenza spreads from dog-to-dog through contact and aerosolized virus particles. Dogs typically recover from canine influenza within two to three weeks and are contagious for seven to 10 days.

**Most dogs get a mild form of the illness, but some develop pneumonia and a small number (5-8%) have died from complications.**

A new canine influenza vaccine has been [approved](#) by the USDA. Canine influenza first came to the attention of the veterinary community during an outbreak in racing Greyhounds in Florida in 2004. It is theorized to have originated from an influenza virus in horses. The canine influenza virus has proven to be a highly contagious virus, but thus far the spread of the disease has been contained to 30 states. [Intervet/Schering-Plough Animal Health](#) states that their canine influenza vaccine will reduce the severity of symptoms in infected animals. This new addition to the vaccine arsenal is welcome in areas where the disease exists, especially for dogs that live a social lifestyle, interacting with many other dogs (grooming, boarding, dog parks, etc.). The vaccine consists of two shots, given two to four weeks apart and then yearly afterwards.



*We have not confirmed any cases from the Grand Rapids area, although there are confirmed cases in states close in proximity such as Illinois and Ohio (please see map).*

- States with confirmed cases of Canine Influenza infected dogs.
- States in which Canine Influenza is native to the area.

At Cascade Hospital for Animals, we do not currently recommend the vaccine for any of our patients. A possible exception might be for dogs traveling to areas where the disease is known to be prevalent. Additional information on Canine Influenza Virus is available from the [American Veterinary Medical Association](#).

If you are interested in having your dog receive the Canine Influenza Vaccine H3N8 vaccine, please contact us at (616) 949-0960.