

## **TICK FEVER**

### **What is Tick fever?**

- Tick Fever is a group of blood-borne diseases that are transmitted to your dog via bites from ticks. Ticks jump onto your dog and use their mouth parts to pierce the skin and suck a blood meal.
- The presence of the tick itself can trigger skin disease through irritation, and during the feeding mechanism the tick can introduce microscopic organisms into your dog's blood which can cause systemic disease.
- There is no dog to dog transmission but any dogs that are in tick-infested areas are at risk.
- There are two main types of these parasites, known as *Ehrlichia* and *Babesia*, which attack the platelets (small cells in the blood stream involved in clotting) and red blood cells respectively.

### **What are the signs of disease?**

Signs can be acute or chronic. They can include:

- Lethargy and lack of appetite.
- Fever
- Panting and breathing difficulties
- Pale gums or jaundice
- Weight loss
- Nose bleeds, bruising and bleeding problems
- Vomiting
- Dark brown or reddish urine
- Painful abdomen due to an enlarged spleen

### **How is it treated?**

- The degree of treatment undergone depends on the severity of the disease in each particular case.
- Treatment for tick fever caused by *Ehrlichia* spp. consists of a course of specific antibiotics for a month or even longer. There are various treatment options for the treatment of tick fever caused by *Babesia* spp. including a course of 1-2 injections or a combination of oral medication (an antibiotic and anti-malarial drug).
- Dogs displaying severe signs of the disease may need to be hospitalized for several days for blood typing, transfusion and intensive monitoring.

**The disease can prove fatal despite treatment** and many dogs that survive the initial disease may end up as life-long carriers prone to subsequent relapses of the disease.

### **How to prevent?**

As always prevention is better than cure:

- Use adequate flea and tick control. A tick collar (e.g. "Preventic") can be used in conjunction with a number of flea and tick prevention products such as "Frontline" applied monthly to the back of the neck.
- Avoid exposure to areas with heavy tick infestations.
- Control the environment where possible using appropriate products and keep vegetation levels down.
- Remove ticks manually if seen.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONSULT YOUR VET**

## 牛蜱熱

### 甚麼是牛蜱熱

- 牛蜱熱是一種經由牛壁蝨(俗稱牛蜱)傳染的血液疾病。牛蜱會跳到犬隻身上，用嘴部吸取犬隻的血液以獲得養份。
- 牛蜱本身會刺激犬隻的皮膚。但更嚴重的是，牛蜱在吸血過程中會傳播致病的微生物，能引起嚴重的系統性疾病。
- 該致病的微生物不能在狗與狗之間直接傳播。但任何有機會接觸到牛蜱的犬隻均有受感染的風險。
- 導致牛蜱熱的病原體為 Babesia 或 Ehrlichia。Babesia 會破壞紅血球；Ehrlichia 則會破壞血小板。

### 臨床病徵

犬隻可出現急性或慢性病徵：

- 昏睡及食慾不振
- 發燒
- 喘氣或呼吸困難
- 牙肉蒼白或黃疸
- 體重下降
- 流鼻血、皮膚瘀傷或流血不止
- 嘔吐
- 深茶或鮮紅色大便
- 因脾臟漲大而導致腹部疼痛

### 治療

- 獸醫會根據病情輕重而決定治療方案。
- 治療 Ehrlichia 感染主要依靠一個療程的抗生素，療程可長達一個月或更長。治療 Babesia 引起的牛蜱熱則有兩種常用方案，其一是針劑（療程為一至兩針），另一方法為一個療程的口服抗生素及抗瘧疾藥物。
- 嚴重患者可能需要接受血液配對，輸血及深切治療。

即使得到治療，部份患者仍然有機會因病情太重而死亡。另外有些患者康復後仍會帶菌，將來有復發的機會。

### 預防方法

預防勝於治療！預防方法包括：

- 定期為犬隻使用殺蚤及牛蜱藥物。除每月使用 Frontline 於犬隻頸背外，主人可同時考慮使用牛蜱帶（如 Preventic）。
- 避免帶狗隻到牛蜱較多的地方，如樹林和草叢。
- 環境控制 - 如定期剪草使牛蜱較難棲息。
- 每次外出後檢查狗隻身上有沒有牛蜱，有的話要將它們移除並最好帶狗隻給獸醫檢查。

欲知道更多有關詳情，可請教你的獸醫