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PRESS RELEASE

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CANINE PARVOVIRUS ON THE RISE IN NORTHERN SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

Consult your veterinarian for vaccination recommendations

(SANTA MARIA, Calif.) -- Santa Barbara County Animal Services is reporting an alarmingly high number of cases of Parvovirus in dogs in Northern Santa Barbara County. The Santa Maria Animal Center has seen 9 confirmed case of Parvovirus come to the shelter in the last two weeks. The infected dogs have ranged in age from six weeks to five months. The cases of Parvovirus documented recently at the shelter have been from the Santa Maria area. Local veterinary practices are also reporting a significant increase in Parvovirus being brought in.

Parvovirus is most commonly seen in young puppies but can affect an unvaccinated dog of any age. Parvovirus is spread from direct dog-to-dog contact, contaminated feces, or contaminated environments. All County residents are urged to keep puppies safe by not letting them outside of your fenced yard until they have received their vaccinations and are protected from the virus. If your dog is unvaccinated, avoid dog parks, beaches, pet stores, and other public places where other dogs may frequent.

Parvo is a virus that attacks the lining of the digestive system and prevents the dog from being able to properly absorb nutrients. Symptoms usually begin with a high fever, lethargy, depression, and loss of appetite. Secondary symptoms appear as severe gastrointestinal distress, including vomiting and bloody diarrhea. In many cases, dehydration, shock, or death can follow. If your dog is exhibiting any of the symptoms of Parvovirus, veterinary treatment is required.

If you have a puppy, contact your veterinarian to receive the Canine Parvovirus vaccination series. Follow your veterinarian's advice on the vaccination schedule. Adult dogs should receive the Parvovirus vaccination as part of their yearly vaccination package. Treatment for the Parvovirus can be very costly, so insuring that your dog is vaccinated against the virus is important.

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CANINE PARVOVIRUS ON THE RISE

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Parvovirus can be shed through feces for up to 30 days after treatment. Help prevent the spread of Parvo by keeping infected dogs isolated from all other dogs for at least one month after recovering, by cleaning up your dog's stool, and by using 1 part chlorine bleach to 30 parts hot water disinfectant on food and water bowls, bedding, and on outdoor areas such as patios.

Parvovirus is specific to dogs and is not transmitted to humans. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your dog and Parvovirus, please consult your veterinarian.

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