



NEWS



City of Los Angeles Department of Animal Services
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DISTEMPER OUTBREAK IN LOS ANGELES

L.A. Animal Services and L.A. County's Veterinary Public Health Office have declared a distemper outbreak in Los Angeles with both agencies recommending distemper vaccinations for all dogs.

In his report, Veterinary Public Health and Rabies Control Chief, Dr. Patrick Ryan, wrote: "We see periodic outbreaks of canine distemper in dogs and wildlife, such as, raccoons. Animal Shelters often experience outbreaks in unvaccinated dogs and puppies. What is occurring in the shelters generally mirrors what is happening in the community,"

Canine distemper is a highly contagious, systemic, worldwide, viral disease of domestic dogs and susceptible wildlife. It is caused by a virus closely related to the measles virus and is transmitted through the air (airborne) or through droplet exposure from the nasal cavity, pharynx and lungs. It cannot be transmitted from animals to humans.

"Distemper can be very dramatic in its presentation causing respiratory, gastrointestinal and neurological symptoms," says L.A. Animal Services Chief Veterinarian, Dr. Casandria Smith. "The course of the disease can be days to weeks characterized by fever, nasal and ocular discharge, depression, anorexia, convulsions, seizures and death. It is physically devastating to the animal and emotionally devastating to animal guardians."

Other animals susceptible to distemper include wildlife such as raccoons, coyotes, foxes, wolves, ferrets, skunks, mink, leopards, lions and tigers.

L.A. Animal Services reminds pet owners to check with their private veterinarians on a regular basis for advice on preventive medicine as well as for guidance on infectious diseases.

For more information on distemper or low cost vaccination clinics, residents can call L.A. Animal Services at **1-888-4LA-PET1** or **1-888-452-7381** (TTY Hearing Impaired: **877-875-8205**) or visit the department's website: www.LAAnimalServices.com

L.A. Animal Services ... we're about saving lives.

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