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ANIMAL HEALTH ADVISORY ***Campylobacter* Infection in Dogs** (23 December 2019)

Puppies and dogs can carry *Campylobacter*, a bacteria that can make people sick. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently concluded a second investigation (following a similar finding in 2018) into a multi-state outbreak of multidrug-resistant *Campylobacter* jejuni infections in humans who had contact with infected puppies sold at a major pet store chain.

The Indiana State Board of Animal Health (BOAH) encourages commercial dog breeders and brokers, pet owners, and veterinarians to be on the lookout for signs of *Campylobacter* infection in dogs and take steps to prevent the spread of infection in other dogs as well as humans. *Campylobacter* can also be found in many species of animals and animal products.

Signs

In canines, *Campylobacter* bacteria may cause diarrhea (sometimes with mucus and blood), reduced appetite, fever, and occasional vomiting. Stress events, such as transportation, may cause an apparently normal puppy or dog carrying the bacteria to start showing clinical signs. Some dogs may have the bacteria but not show clinical signs.

Testing

A licensed veterinarian may perform a fecal smear to screen for *Campylobacter*-like organisms. Veterinarians may also send a stool sample to a veterinary diagnostic laboratory for confirmation of *Campylobacter* bacteria.

Sanitation & Prevention

The disease can be easily transmitted through animal feces. To prevent spread, isolate ill dogs and clean and disinfect surroundings thoroughly. Handlers/caretakers should thoroughly wash their hands with soap and water after handling dogs, pet food, and after touching/cleaning the dogs' environment.

Treatment

Dogs usually recover from *Campylobacter* infections with supportive care. The choice of antibiotic for treatment should be guided by laboratory culture results, since some *Campylobacter* bacteria strains are resistant to one or more drugs. If *Campylobacter* is diagnosed the dog owner should work with his or her veterinarian to develop a treatment and control plan.

Information

Information about the most recent CDC investigation is available at:
www.cdc.gov/campylobacter/outbreaks/puppies-12-19/index.html

Information for commercial dog breeders is available online at: www.in.gov/boah/2549.htm

Contact BOAH with questions at: 877-747-3038 or animalhealth@boah.in.gov

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