



FACT SHEET

Ehrlichia Canis



Ehrlichia Canis is a bacterial infection that is spread between canines, including domestic dogs and wild members of the canine family such as foxes, through brown-tick bites.

The bacteria infect white blood cells leading to initial symptoms such as fever, discharge from the eyes and nose, poor appetite, lethargy and weight loss.

The brown-tick which spreads Ehrlichia Canis (*E. canis*) is mostly associated with tropical and subtropical environments.

However, because the tick can complete its entire life cycle indoors, it has the potential to establish populations in colder climates.

HOW DOES E. CANIS SPREAD?

Dogs become infected with *E. canis* after being bitten by an infected tick.

E. canis is transmitted primarily by the brown dog tick (*Rhipicephalus sanguineus*), which is widely distributed worldwide and is present in Australia.

Dogs do not transmit the disease to each other. The disease is maintained by a cycle of transmission between ticks and dogs.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Initial symptoms of infection with *E. canis* include fever, discharge from the eyes and nose, poor appetite, lethargy and weight loss. The early stage of infection usually lasts for two to four weeks.

In the later stages of infection (50-100 days), dogs may show signs of bleeding disorders, pale gums, swollen lymph nodes (glands under the neck and other sites (around the body) and further weight loss.



WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I SUSPECT MY GREYHOUND HAS E. CANIS?

Any suspicion for *E. canis*, particularly in greyhounds from interstate or after known tick-exposure, should be investigated by your veterinarian.

E. canis can be diagnosed by a blood test. If treated quickly, symptoms will generally improve within a few days and without long term effects.





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WHAT CAN I DO TO PREVENT THE TRANSMISSION OF E. CANIS?

Unfortunately, there is no vaccination to prevent the infection.

However, there are ways to help prevent the transmission of E.canis:

- Maintain dogs on a tick control program – ask your vet for the most suitable product and application regime.
- Avoid taking dogs into tick-infested areas such as the bush where possible.
- Inspect dogs for ticks after being in tick-infested areas (especially around the neck, head, ears, armpits and belly) and carefully remove any ticks. Your vet can advise on the best methods of tick removal.

OTHER INFORMATION

E. canis primarily causes disease in dogs; and infected dogs cannot pass the disease directly to humans.

However, in rare cases, infected ticks may transmit E. canis to people. Infection usually causes flu-like symptoms in humans, ranging from mild body aches to severe fever, within a week or two of the tick bite.

E. canis is a notifiable disease. This means that it must be reported to agricultural authorities.

Your veterinarian will be able to do this if E. canis in a greyhound is suspected or confirmed.

QUESTIONS? >>>>>>

If you have any questions about Ehrlichia Canis, please contact our veterinarian team.



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