



Making life less stressful for you and your dog

THE DOG DORK DIGEST

NEWS FROM POSITIVE INTERACTIONS DOG BEHAVIOR AND TRAINING

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✧ Highlights ✧

“Mystery” Canine Respiratory Illness

You may have heard on the news recently of a respiratory illness that has been effecting dogs in various regions of the US and Canada. Veterinarians across the country are reporting an increased incidence of cases of canine respiratory disease that do not respond to regular treatment protocols. In addition, those dogs affected experience a longer and more severe disease course than is typical for canine infectious respiratory disease (CIRD) complex. A cause for this canine respiratory illness has not yet been determined.

Author Erica Moser recently wrote an article in Penn Today (<https://www.vet.upenn.edu/about/news-room/news-stories/news-...>) interviewing [Deborah Silverstein](#), professor of emergency and critical care at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine and section chief of emergency and critical care at Ryan Veterinary Hospital. Below are her three main takeaways regarding this illness.

- **It’s unclear whether there’s a new organism involved** Silverstein says it is unknown at this point whether a novel organism is causing increased cases in certain parts of the country, but whatever organism is involved is behaving like organisms veterinarians *do* know, which are the ones that cause the commonly recognized canine infectious respiratory disease

complex (CIRDC). "I think it's premature to say it's mysterious or that it's not something that has been around for years, but, without definitely identifying what's causing the current illnesses, it's impossible for anyone to say with certainty," she says.

- **Stay calm, and don't worry** Silverstein says she has not seen a noticeable increase at Penn Vet, though she notes there does seem to be an increase in an atypical respiratory illness in some areas of the country. "I think there are several potential reasons as to why we're seeing a potential increase in cases," Silverstein says. "Since emerging from the pandemic, people have been traveling, which means they board their animals. More people are getting out and going to dog parks and using doggie daycares and just wanting to be social again, and it seems many people acquired new pets during the pandemic that may have naive immune systems."
- **Help keep your dog healthy** Vaccinate your dog before traveling for the holidays, since it takes two weeks for a vaccine to take maximum effect. Those vaccines include Bordetella, canine parainfluenza, and canine influenza. Some vaccines may not be appropriate for every dog, so speak to your veterinarian about which vaccine they recommend. Keep your dog away from dogs who are coughing or sneezing and to keep your dog home if sick. If you are planning to board your dog, ask the boarding facility they have had recent incidents of displaying respiratory illness and, if so, consider other options for pet care.
- **What to do if your dog starts coughing** If the dog is eating, drinking, and breathing normally, Silverstein advises the owner to keep the dog inside and call their veterinarian if they have concerns or if their pet stops eating, is lethargic, or has a fever. If their dog is short of breath or develops a purple or blue-tinged tongue or gums, she says "that's an indication they should be seen by a veterinarian immediately." If the dog is not in severe respiratory distress, Silverstein recommends people call ahead instead of rushing their dog into the veterinary clinic, as Penn Vet and other facilities take precautions to keep sick dogs from being in proximity to other dogs.

DOGS IN ACTION

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Saving Lives in the Snow

The mention of a rescue dog on a mountain might conjure up a St. Bernard, plowing through snow drifts carrying blankets and whiskey. In reality, you are much more likely to run into a German Shepherd, Border Collie, Labrador, or Golden Retriever. These types of dogs - active, hard-working nose detectives - are the partners of choice for avalanche search and rescue teams. Trained to locate human scent in snowbanks, a fully certified "avy dog" can cover 2.5 acres in thirty minutes, an area it would take people four hours to cover.

To an avalanche victim, that speed can mean the difference between life and death. Barring fatal injury, as many as 90 percent of victims survive if found within the first 15 minutes of burial, a figure that drops to 30 percent after half an hour. Avalanche dogs go through rigorous training, all based on positive-reinforcement methods. The handler determines where it's most likely someone could be buried, how the wind is blowing, and then releases the dog to search based on a strategy of optimal coverage. When the dog indicates human scent by digging in the snow and wagging her tail, humans with shovels take over. Every year, avy dogs help save lives in the world's mountainous regions and ski resorts. Are you a skier? Carry dog treats!

HEALTHY DOG



Healthy Treats for Healthy Dogs

Treats are an essential part of canine life—ask any dog. Not only great for every teachable moment and training session, treats can help you build a positive association for your dog towards something new or scary. By definition, treats are delicious and desirable, and treat makers often achieve this with extra fat, salt, and sugar. Here are some rules of thumb to avoid undermining your dog's healthy diet.

First, look for commercially made dog treats that contain named meats (e.g., "chicken" or "chicken meal," not simply "meat" or "meal") and vegetables. Some preservatives are necessary, especially in chewy treats, so opt for natural ones like vitamins C and E and avoid BHA, BHT, ethoxyquin, sodium nitrate, and other chemicals. If you're seeking low calorie options, some dogs love sliced apple, carrot and blueberries. For extra training motivation, a small cube of cheddar or a bit of leftover chicken may do the trick. Just remember - everything in moderation!

DOG IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Bichon Frise

This cheerful and companionable powderpuff hails from the Mediterranean area; bichons traveled widely as companions for sailors, minstrels, and circus groups. Beginning in the Middle Ages and into the Renaissance, they found favor with one royal European family after another, from Spain to Italy to France (King Henry III of France reputedly carried his bichon in a basket hanging from his neck). Bichons are the star performers of the dog world. Consummate entertainers, they love engaging with their people and can play and clown around for hours. The well-socialized bichon is friendly, resilient, and quick to learn. This, combined with a sturdy build, makes him an equally great buddy whether traveling or lounging at home. Despite his classification as a non-sporting dog, the bichon is a terrific little athlete that, with training, can excel at agility, nose work, and other dog sports.

To give a bichon frise a home, search online for a rescue organization near you.

“Did you know that there are over 300 words for love in canine?” Gabriel Zevin



OUR SERVICES

Dog Training and Behavior Gift Cards!

The traditional season of gift-giving may be over but giving someone a gift that keeps on giving will be appreciated any time of the year. Give someone you care about a gift card for dog training services with Positive Interactions Dog Behavior and Training.

This is a great gift for that friend or family member who just brought home a new puppy and is a bit overwhelmed with house training issues and the chewing and nipping that all puppies do. Or the co-worker who just rescued a dog and needs some help with leash walking skills. Consider giving this gift as a donation to your favorite shelter or rescue for a dog that needs professional help so they can find their forever home.

It's easy to do.

- **Open this link, <https://positiveinteractionsdogbehaviorandtraining.com/recom...> scroll down and then. click on "Purchase Gift Card".**
- **Choose your card design, gift amount, and gift recipient name.**

- **Your designated gift recipient will receive a code that can then be used to schedule a training session with Positive Interactions Dog Behavior and Training.**



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