



Common Health Issues for Rescue Dogs

What you know will help if it happens.

At Boxer Rescue LA we receive dogs from a variety of city shelters and different environments. Even with strict sanitation protocol, infected animals coming in may be carriers of these common ailments. Your new boxer may or may not have been exposed to these conditions.

Kennel Cough (KC)

Just like kids in nursery school that share colds, dogs in kennel situation share a common ailment called Kennel Cough. It is a virus that is spread by air or direct contact. Dogs may not show any symptoms for a week to 10 days. The symptoms include a runny nose, runny eyes and a hacking cough and/or gagging.

KC is treated with a variety of antibiotics. You can also use children's cough medicine (DM-alcohol free). Keep the dog warm and quiet. A humidifier can be helpful to relieve congestion. Cuppage in a steamy bathroom is also helpful.

KC can be contagious to your resident dogs. To reduce the risk, do not share water or food bowls. Have dogs sleep separately and avoid licking each others mouths. To disinfect you can use Grapefruit Seed Extract (@ Whole foods) dilute in a spray bottle to clean up any phlegm. You can burn in a diffuser to disinfect the air. You can put 5 drops in the water bowl to prevent contamination.

If discharge or phlegm becomes yellow or green, consult a vet as stronger medication is needed to prevent pneumonia.

Diarrhea

It is extremely common for newly adopted dogs to have loose stool for the first few days. The change in their life can affect their gastric systems. This should resolve itself in a few days. You can help firm their stool by adding canned pumpkin, cottage cheese or cooked rice to their food. You can also use 2 teaspoons of Pepto-Bismal or Kaopectate every 4 hours. There are medication that can help.

Giardia

If the diarrhea continues and becomes bloody, the dog may have picked up giardia. Giardia are protozoans, tiny one-celled parasitic life forms. They can be spread in a kennel situation by dogs stepping on contaminated ground or by drinking infected water. Giardia is treatable with medication, usually Flagyl or Albon.

Because Giardia crosses species and can infect people, sanitation is important. Be sure to wash hands after cleaning dog runs or removing feces from yards, and babies and toddlers should be kept away from dogs that have diarrhea. When traveling with Fido, owners should prevent him from drinking potentially infected

If you understand that these contagious conditions are hard to control and understand how easily they are treated you will have the information to understand and treat these temporary conditions should they affect your newly adopted Boxer.