

# **CANINE BRUCELLOSIS**

## **Basic Facts about Contagious Abortion**

**1. First known to exist in 1963 in Beagles.**

Since then, incidence studies have shown increasing number of affected dogs of all breeds.

**2. 25% of all suspect dogs TESTED in this area are positive for Brucella canis, the cause of the disease.**

**3. Clinically, the disease is usually manifested by reproductive failure and generalized swollen lymph glands.** Other forms of the disease may include chronic meningitis, brain disease, and spinal problems.

**4. Since the signs associated with the disease are usually mild, diagnosis of the disease is made on the basis of a history of abortions, infertility, pronounced vaginal discharge, testicular abnormalities, demonstration of a specific antibody in the patient's serum (test done by state and federal diagnostic labs), and the isolation of B. canis from the blood of the suspect animal.** New, rapid tests that can be done in the office have been developed.

**5. Transmission is chiefly oral although any mucous membrane can serve as portal of entry.**

After 1-3 weeks incubation in the regional lymph nodes, a general bacterial infection occurs which typically last for one year and may last over 30 months. This bacteremia **is not** accompanied by fever.

**6. There seems to be some degree of immunity.**

Although dogs have been reported to sequentially abort up to three times, most abort once or twice and then, if kept for breeding, give birth to one or more normal litters. At the present time, there is **NO** vaccine on the market.

**7. The best treatment seems to be a new two-stage technique as follows:**

- (a) Antibiotics for three weeks.
- (b) No treatment for a few weeks (generally two).
- (c) Repeat antibiotics for three weeks.
- (d) Then retest (2 negative tests, 60 days apart.)

**8. Control within a kennel consists of rigid testing and elimination of positive dogs.**

New arrivals and suspects are placed in isolation units until at least two negative test results one month apart. Pets and highly valuable working dogs should receive treatment and remain in isolation until two consecutive tests, at least 60 days apart, are negative.

**9. Humans are rather resistant to infection, but if the disease is contracted, it is easily treated with antibiotics.**

Headache, fatigue, swollen lymph glands, and fever are the main signs. The owner of an infected dog should be informed of the public health risk.

**10. Disinfect kennel daily with iodine or Clorox disinfectants.**

**11. It is your duty to inform the public of this disease and its implications if your pet is diagnosed positive.**