

Ehrlichiosis

Travelling with your dog

Ehrlichiosis, a tick-borne dog disease, has been detected in the Northern Territory and is present in most local government areas, including Darwin, Palmerston, Darwin rural area, Katherine and many remote communities.

Ehrlichiosis is a bacterial disease spread by the brown dog tick. Once the disease is in the brown dog tick population it's very difficult to control, particularly in the tropical and subtropical regions.

This disease affects dogs and can result in death if not properly treated. You should take these simple steps to protect your dog when you are travelling in the NT.

Protect your dog from ehrlichiosis

Prevention is the best protection as vaccinations are not available.

- Have your dogs on a tick control program. Tick collars and spot-ons are the best primary protection used in combination with tablets and chews registered for tick control.
- Ensure any tick infestations in the house yard are managed by a pest controller.
- Avoid taking your dogs into tick-infested areas.
- Take care when bush-walking with your dog.

Inspect your dogs daily for ticks

- Run your fingers through your pet's coat over their skin, feeling for abnormal bumps.
- Pay particular attention to the head, neck and ears, chest, between their toes and around their mouths and gums.
- Remove ticks carefully using a tick remover or fine tipped forceps, grabbing it as close to the skin as possible avoiding squeezing the body of the tick.
- Kill the tick by putting it in alcohol, into a sealed container and then into the rubbish.

If it looks suss, call us 1800 675 888.



Travelling or boarding your dog

Before hitting the road:

- Check in with your vet to assess disease prevention requirements such as vaccination, worming, tick and flea control, heartworm preventive.
- When travelling avoid contact with other dogs when stopping, such as at fuel stations, truck stops or caravan parks, to avoid disease transmission between dogs.
- When boarding your dog, make sure their tick, flea, worm and vaccinations are up to date. Check with your local boarding kennel on mandatory disease prevention requirements.

Look out for signs

- fever
- lethargy
- loss of appetite
- weight loss
- cloudy eyes or conjunctivitis
- pain and stiffness
- bleeding disorders such as nosebleeds or bruising on the gums or belly.

Human health

The disease cannot be directly passed from infected dogs to humans.

In extremely rare cases, ticks infected with *Ehrlichia canis* may infect people. Human ehrlichiosis is almost always caused by species other than *Ehrlichia canis* and these species have not yet been found in Australia.

For information on human health implications associated with ticks, as well as prevention, removal and first aid advice see ww2.health.wa.gov.au/en/Articles/S_T/Ticks

It's important to seek veterinary advice and treatment as ehrlichiosis can resemble other tick-borne dog diseases already present in the Territory. Early treatment provides the best chance of recovery.

If you suspect your dog is showing signs of the disease, report it your local vet or call the national Emergency Animal Disease Watch hotline on 1800 675 888.

More information about ehrlichiosis can be found at nt.gov.au/ehrlichiosis



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