**PARVOVIRUS INFORMATION**

Canine parvovirus is a highly contagious and deadly disease. The virus can live in the environment for at least 12 months, longer in ideal conditions, so unvaccinated dogs of *all* ages are at risk. Parvovirus can affect all breeds, ages or sex of dogs, however puppies have the highest risk of becoming infected.

***Signs of parvovirus infection include:***

***Lethargy***

***Loss of interest in food***

***Vomiting***

***Bloody Diarrhea***

The vomiting and diarrhea result in severe dehydration, and in many cases, death. Untreated dogs die a very painful and miserable death.

**To treat an affected dog requires intensive care hospitalisation, intensive fluid therapy, blood tests and in some cases plasma transfusions. There is no guarantee of survival, and treatment is very costly.**

Parvovirus survives in the environment for at least 12 months, and is spread predominately via contaminated faeces. Vomit and saliva may also contain the virus. Clothing, shoes or objects such as car tyres may also be contaminated with the virus and act as a way for the disease to spread. ***Therefore, your dog does not have to leave your yard to contract Parvovirus.***

A complete vaccination program is the best way to prevent infection.

For puppies we recommend an initial course of 3 vaccinations at 6-8 weeks, 10-12 weeks and 14-16 weeks, followed by annual boosters every 12 months. For dogs between four and six months we recommend two vaccinations one month apart. For unvaccinated dogs over 6 months, a single injection, followed by annual boosters should be sufficient to provide protection.

If you think your puppy or dog is showing symptoms of parvovirus, it is important to contact the hospital as soon as possible. ***Please leave your dog in the car and let reception staff know you have arrived. This is to protect other dogs in the hospital and prevent spread of the disease.***