

Lately there seems to be a lot of talk and questions about Leptospirosis. This is a disease we first diagnosed in our clinic back in 2001 in a Rottweiler. Leptospirosis is a zoonotic disease, meaning that it can be transmitted between animals and people. It is most commonly found in middle-aged male dogs but can be found in any dog and even rarely in cats. The disease most commonly causes liver and kidney problems, and/or abortion. Transmission can be direct through contact with urine, venereal transfer, bite wounds, or ingestion of infected tissues. It can also be indirect through exposure to contaminated water, soil, bedding or food sources. It often times occurs through exposure to contaminated water in areas with high concentrations of maintenance hosts such as mice, raccoons and opossums.

Because it is a zoonotic disease, and can be easily carried through common hosts such as mice, raccoons and opossums which are plentiful in Southern Illinois, we have always included Leptospirosis in our basic canine vaccinations. While no vaccine is 100% effective, we use the best multiple serovar vaccines available. You may encounter misleading stories from breeders or through the internet that Leptospirosis vaccines are somehow dangerous or cause reactions, but this could not be further from the truth. Again, we have used thousands of doses of these vaccines for years, and have never encountered a serious reaction. For the protection of both you and your pet, we have always felt that this vaccine is essential. If we have provided current vaccinations your dog, rest assured that we have already done everything possible to protect him/her, and in turn you, from this potentially deadly disease.