



**PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT**  
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## **P R E S S R E L E A S E**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Parvovirus Outbreak Warning** **Be sure your dog is vaccinated**

Santa Barbara County Animal Services is reporting an alarmingly high number of cases of Parvovirus in dogs in Northern Santa Barbara County. The Santa Maria Animal Center has seen 15 confirmed case of Parvovirus come to their shelter in the last five days. The infected dogs have ranged in age from puppy to young adults. Parvovirus is most commonly seen in young puppies but can affect an unvaccinated dog of any age.

The cases of Parvovirus documented recently by the shelter have been from a large section of Santa Maria. Although Parvovirus can be contracted from any contaminated area, Santa Barbara County Animal Services reports that the majority of cases have been seen in the area North of Stowell Road and West of Broadway Road in Santa Maria. All County residents are urged to keep all puppies safe by not letting them outside of your fenced yard until they have received their vaccinations and are protected from the virus.

Parvo is a virus that attacks the lining of the digestive system and prevents the dog from being able to properly absorb nutrients. Symptoms usually begin with a high fever, lethargy, depression, and loss of appetite. Secondary symptoms appear as severe gastrointestinal distress, including vomiting and bloody diarrhea. In many cases, dehydration, shock, or death can follow.

If you have a puppy, contact your veterinarian to receive the Canine Parvovirus vaccination series. Follow your veterinarian's advice on the vaccination schedule. Adult dogs should receive the Parvovirus vaccination as part of their yearly shot package. Treatment for the Parvovirus can be very costly, so insuring that your dog is vaccinated against the disease is extremely important. Dogs 4 months and older are required to be Rabies vaccinated and licensed.

If your puppy or dog is exhibiting any of the symptoms of Parvo, veterinary treatment is required. Help prevent the spread of Parvo by keeping infected dogs isolated from all other dogs for at least one month after recovering, by cleaning up your dog's stool, and by using a 1 part chlorine bleach to 30 parts hot water disinfectant on food and water bowls, bedding, and on outdoor areas such as patios. If your pet is unvaccinated, do not take it to places where interaction with other dogs is likely.

Parvovirus is specific to dogs and is not transmitted to humans or pets of a different species, such as cats. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your dog and Parvovirus please consult your veterinarian.

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