

Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine

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World's only canine pneumovirus test offered in new dog diagnostic suite

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The world's first diagnostic test for canine pneumovirus, a unique culprit in canine respiratory illness common in shelters and kennels, is now available at Cornell's Animal Health Diagnostic Center (AHDC). Discovered in 2008 at the AHDC, the virus causes cell death in patterns unlike other viruses commonly found in dogs. Veterinarians had no way of identifying it from among the many pathogens causing canine respiratory illness until now.

The test is one of several available in the AHDC's new canine respiratory panel. Finding the actual culprits in respiratory cases once took weeks of testing. The new panel offers a faster, easier, and more accurate way to diagnose. Commonly called "kennel cough", respiratory diseases often emerge in shelters, kennels, and other places where dogs live in close quarters. In such settings quick correct diagnosis is critical to curbing outbreaks.

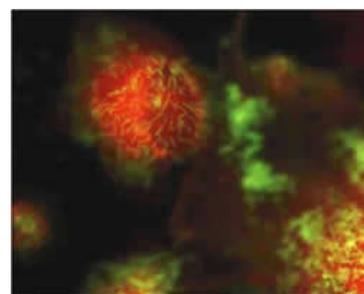
"This is a great tool for handling respiratory outbreaks in dogs," said Dr. Amy Glaser, director of the AHDC's molecular diagnostics lab. "It's faster and more reliable than previous methods. It can also detect multiple pathogens in a single sample, which frequently occurs. It greatly simplifies testing and will make it easier for veterinarians to get answers for their patients."

The panel uses polymerase chain reaction (PCR) analysis to identify the most common viruses and bacteria associated with canine respiratory disease. Detected pathogens include the canine viruses parainfluenza 5, respiratory coronavirus (beta coronavirus), pneumovirus, adenovirus (types 1 and 2), distemper, and influenza. The panel also detects the bacteria *Mycoplasma cynos* and *Bordatella bronchiseptica*, which can infect humans.



Previously only canine influenza could be detected by PCR at the AHDC. Other canine respiratory pathogens were only detectable by isolation in cell or bacterial culture or by testing paired serum samples. Developed by Dr. Edward Dubovi's team in the AHDC's virology section, the new PCR panel can detect viruses that are difficult to detect by the former culture method.

PCR tests can be ordered individually for \$36.75 each, or as a panel at a discount rate of \$115. Results are available in three to five business days after sample receipt at the lab. Interpretation services are always included.



Canine Pneumovirus filaments budding from a canine cell in the lab (AHDC)

Dr. Edward Dubovi,
director of virology
at the AHDC

To enable detection of both viruses and bacteria, the AHDC suggests submission of both a nasal and an oral pharyngeal swab. Swabs can be submitted together in a red-top tube with a few drops of saline or in commercial viral transport media. Aerobic culture and antimicrobial susceptibility testing of swab samples are also available. Additional samples must be collected and submitted separately in a suitable bacterial transport medium such as Amies.

Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine

 Ithaca, NY 14853

 (607) 253-3000

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