

Dog Coughing or Wheezing

The causes and treatments of a dog's cough.

CAUSES OF COUGHING OR WHEEZING

Infectious diseases: Infectious tracheobronchitis (kennel cough), pneumonia due to distemper, parainfluenza, adenovirus-1 or adenovirus-2 infection with secondary bacterial infection, coccidioidomycosis (fungal infection), or chronic bronchitis.

Parasites/Parasite-borne diseases: Roundworms, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, ehrlichiosis, tick paralysis, or heartworms.

Irritation/Inflammation: Smoke inhalation, exposure to chemical fumes or noxious vapors (tracheitis), or aspiration of food.

Foreign bodies: In trachea or bronchi.

Allergies: Allergic pneumonitis (inflammation of the lungs) due to heartworms or infections (fungal or bacterial).

Tumors: In the larynx, trachea, and lungs.

Congenital abnormality: Tracheal collapse, laryngeal deformity, laryngeal paralysis, or megaesophagus (enlargement of the lower part of the esophagus, a condition that frequently leads to aspiration pneumonia).

Toxicity: Lead, causing megaesophagus.

Non-infectious/Acquired disease: Heart disease, myasthenia gravis, or polymyositis.

Miscellaneous disorders: Dysautonomia (abnormal function of the autonomic nervous system), which can cause megaesophagus.

Endocrine disorders: Hypoadrenocorticism (Addison's disease).

Autoimmune disease: Systemic lupus erythematosus, which can cause megaesophagus.

What to do: Coughing without other signs of illness is not usually an emergency. Call your veterinarian during regular office hours to make an appointment for diagnosis and treatment. Coughing that is accompanied by signs of illness may or may not be an emergency, depending on the duration, severity, and the other signs. Contact your veterinarian or emergency clinic immediately for specific advice about your dog's situation.

Disclaimer: DogChannel.com's Dog Medical Conditions are intended for educational purposes only. They are not meant to replace the expertise and experience of a professional veterinarian. Do not use the information presented here to make decisions about your dog's ailment. If you notice changes in your dog's health or behavior, please take your pet to the nearest veterinarian or an emergency pet clinic as soon as possible.

Have a health question about your dog? Ask our vet expert or ask other dog owners on our forums.