

Some Salmon-Eating Dogs at Risk

Dogs who ingest raw or undercooked salmon are at risk of contracting Salmon Poisoning Disease.

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Salmon Poisoning Disease (SPD) is an acute illness in dogs, wolves, ferrets, and foxes who eat raw salmon, trout, or similar freshwater fish. SPD is most commonly seen in the Pacific Northwest, however a dog recently diagnosed with the disease in Southern California has prompted officials to warn dog owners of the potential risk.

Dogs can contract the disease if they eat fish stricken with the illness. Symptoms of SPD include vomiting, diarrhea, fever, loss of appetite, and enlarged lymph nodes.

“Most people in this area are unfamiliar with the symptoms of this disease, which appear within five to seven days after eating infected raw fish,” said Mike Moore, veterinarian at VCA All-Care Animal Referral Center. “Left undiagnosed, SPD can be fatal within several weeks.”

Although these fish are not native to Southern California, they are commonly planted in the region’s lakes for sport fishing, according to the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health.

The health department recommends that dog owners never allow their pets to consume raw fish or fish products, and that fisherman use exceptional sanitation when cleaning fish. If a dog becomes ill after eating fish caught from a freshwater lake, pet owners should consult with a veterinarian immediately.