

Canine Brucellosis is an infectious disease caused by the bacteria *Brucella Canis*. It is an emerging disease in the UK but fortunately it is currently uncommon. Sadly, cases are rising due to the increasing number of untested dogs being imported/rescued from countries where it is endemic. It is a zoonotic disease, which means it is transmissible from dog to humans, and last year, the UK had its first known case of dog to human transmission.

Clinical Signs in Dogs

- Abortion or weak/fading puppies
- Fertility issues
- Enlarged, painful testicles
- Lethargy
- Loss of libido
- Premature aging
- Lameness (particularly back pain)
- Generalised lymph node enlargement
- Some may show no clinical signs but are at high risk of going on to suffer clinical disease later in their life.

Brucella can be transmitted from dog to dog in several ways:

- Mating
- Contact with products of conception from an infected dog
- From mother to pup
- Contact with infectious vaginal discharge or seminal fluid
- To a lesser extent, contact with infectious urine
- Contact with non-menstrual blood
- To a lower extent faeces, saliva, or nasal secretions

Mature, sexually intact animals are at highest risk of infection and being infectious. Neutered individuals have a lower risk but still pose a threat. So, it is important to consider this when rescuing a pet from abroad, particularly if you already have other dogs, as again, the first cases of *brucella* being transmitted from an imported dog to a UK dog, has now occurred.

Brucella is a growing concern in the UK due to the risk of transmission to humans. It is not commonly reported even in areas of the world where the level of *B. canis* is high as most contact with an infected dog carries low risk, but people that come into contact with large numbers of *B. canis* are at a higher risk. People that are immunocompromised, young children and pregnant women may be at a higher risk of severe disease if they acquire the infection. It is also likely that it is under-diagnosed in humans due to the vague, non-specific signs and lack of validated human tests.

Clinical Signs in Humans

- Often mild and non-specific
- Continued, intermittent, or irregular fever
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss
- Sweating
- Fatigue
- Back and/or joint pain
- If left untreated, the disease can become chronic and more serious symptoms may arise.