

## **CANINE LEPTOSPIROSIS**

Many clients have been asking me for advice regarding the above named disease, which in short form, is simply known as “Lepto”.

Leptospira is a spirochete, which is a bacteria that is shed through the urine of wildlife — the most common source being, raccoons, skunks, opossums and voles.

This bacteria, in general, is deposited on the ground. If a dog walks in that area and then licks his or her paws, they will ingest the bacteria and this will cause infection. The bacteria attacks mainly the kidneys and liver, and is often fatal, if not treated.

If your pet was unfortunate enough to require treatment for this infection, one would anticipate a one to two week stay in the veterinary hospital Intensive Care Unit.

The incidence of Leptospirosis is on the increase, despite the fact that, on its return as a concern, veterinarians have started vaccinating against this horrible disease. Leptospirosis is also zoonotic, which means that it can be transmitted to humans.

Over the past years, I have always advocated the use of the Lepto Vaccine, in dogs who go to the cottage, camping or hikes.

Just recently we had our first case of Lepto at this hospital — a lovely 13-year-old dog named “Clyde”- who lives here in the town of Milton. He underwent lengthy intensive care, and now seems to be doing very well.

Interestingly enough, Clyde does not go outside the Milton area, so he probably contracted the disease in the park or on the sidewalk, on his daily walks. Alternatively, maybe, from his own back yard.

If you have any further questions regarding Lepto, please contact your veterinarian, who will be happy to advise you.