

What is Parvo?

Parvo viral enteritis is a life-threatening, contagious disease seen primarily in young, unvaccinated puppies, or in puppies that have not received their full series of vaccinations. Parvo specifically attacks the rapidly dividing cells in the body- this means that it destroys the white blood cells, leaving you predisposed to more infection, and it destroys the inside lining of the intestinal tract, causing severe vomiting and diarrhea.

What is the treatment?

Treatment focuses on several things:

1. Antibiotics to help prevent infection with the poor ability to fight infection until the white blood cells and lining of the intestines grow back
2. Fluids to maintain hydration as puppies become very dehydrated with ongoing vomiting and diarrhea
3. Medications to protect the intestinal tract from further damage while it heals
4. Anti-nausea medications
5. Nutrition- even though these puppies have nausea or vomiting, getting nutrition in to them by mouth is one of the best ways to help the intestinal tract start to heal
6. Pain medications- severe cases have bad abdominal pain and may need medications to help with this

Will the puppy survive?

Overall puppies treated in the hospital have an 80% chance of survival, though treatment can take several days. It is not uncommon for puppies to get worse before they get better. Sadly those treated as outpatients (ones that go home for treatment there) only have about a 50% chance of survival.

Where can I get more information about parvo?

Please visit www.veterinarypartner.com and enter the search term parvo. This is a great website and should answer your questions. There is also information in English and Spanish on the disease at:

<https://www.avma.org/public/PetCare/Pages/canine-parvovirus.aspx>