

Researchers warn of deadly parvovirus strain spreading in Australian dogs

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Dogs suspected of having the disease need to see a vet quickly. Credit: University of Queensland

Vets and dog owners are being warned that canine parvovirus – a contagious and often fatal disease – is spreading rapidly among Australian dogs.

University of Queensland School of Veterinary Science postdoctoral research fellow Dr. Nicholas Clark said [canine parvovirus](#) (CPV-2) was one of the most globally important diseases infecting domestic dogs.

"Dog owners should vaccinate their pets against this insidious infection, and anyone who suspects their dogs might have the disease should have them treated or hospitalised without delay," he said.

Dr. Clark said parvovirus – which causes lethargy, vomiting, fever and [bloody diarrhoea](#), and can kill puppies and young [dogs](#) – was first detected in the 1970s, and two new strains began circulating in the 1980s.

Dr. Clark, UQ's Professor Joanne Meers and other scientists at UQ and Boehringer Ingelheim Pty Ltd have now discovered that a strain previously identified as minor is expanding across Australia.

"This is important because identifying various strains of the virus is a key to successful treatment," Dr. Clark said.

"We need ongoing monitoring programs to detect new variants and make informed recommendations to develop reliable detection and vaccine methods."

More information: Nicholas J. Clark et al. Emergence of canine parvovirus subtype 2b (CPV-2b) infections in Australian dogs, *Infection, Genetics and Evolution* (2017). [DOI: 10.1016/j.meegid.2017.12.013](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.meegid.2017.12.013)

Provided by University of Queensland

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