



Stings and bitey things

A dog out hunting will come across some usual bugs and germs in the unique environments they work in and some even pose a risk to hunters.

Bitey Bugs: these might include fleas, bees, wasps etc.

Be mindful of the products that you use to prevent fleas. Topical products are often not water proof so the minute your keen hunter dives in the water after their quarry, they may be washing the substance off.

Oral options are the best and combination products often help prevent other nasties as well. While there is nothing we can do to prevent bee and wasp stings there are some handy first aid tips. Check with your vet for appropriate anti-histamines and a dose rate for your dog and keep some handy in your first aid kit.

Ticks: There are numerous types of ticks, most of them found on wildlife and feral animals and on shrubbery, leading to

increased risk of exposure in our hunting breeds.

We are seeing more tick cases these days with established populations in new areas previously thought to be "tick free." Clinical signs of weakness, inappetence (lack of desire or appetite), drooling, vomiting, through to paralysis and death can occur.

If you suspect that your dog has been exposed to one of the paralysis causing ticks then you should seek urgent veterinary attention.

Do not try to remove the tick unless you have the equipment and the skill, as removing the body from the head will cause the tick to inject more of the toxic saliva into your dog. Trying to burn them off produces the same toxic saliva

response and risks burning your dog. Prevention is the best cure and multiple products are now available.

Nexgard Spectra will treat for fleas, ticks, heartworm and intestinal worms as a monthly combination product. Bravecto will treat ticks and fleas for three months with a single chew, and Seresto Collars will prevent ticks for four months and fleas for up to eight months. You will still need to check for ticks even with preventative treatments.

It is important to remember that ticks will also feed on humans and can cause paralysis and diseases such as Lyme disease, so be mindful of your risk too.

Intestinal worms: Hookworms can cause severe disease. They are blood feeders, the animal will become weak, and



sometimes black, tarry stools can be seen. There may be vomiting and diarrhoea. In severe infestations, animals may cough or develop pneumonia as the larvae migrate through the lungs. Animals may become emaciated and eventually die from the infection. The larvae can be ingested in contaminated drinking water or food, or burrow through the skin to infect the host. The whipworm (*Trichuris vulpis*) parasite is usually transmitted to dogs when they eat contaminated matter, although whipworms pass from infected animals as well. Whipworm eggs can live in an environment for years, and can be present in soil, food, or water, as well as in faeces or animal flesh. Additionally, whipworms can infect dogs of any age. Hydatids are the most serious of the intestinal worms,

contracted when a dog eats the carcass of an infected sheep or goat. The dog carries the adult hydatid tapeworm, which is about 4–6 mm long, with tapeworm eggs and segments passed in its dung. The sheep, goat or human swallows the eggs released from the tapeworm segments, which further develop in the small intestine leading to cyst formation in tissues such as the liver or lungs. Sheep or goats tend to suffer no ill effects and after initial exposure, their resistance generally prevents new cysts from forming. In humans, however, the cysts can cause serious illness or even death. Surgery is required to remove cysts. Avoiding feeding dogs fresh flesh from hunted carcasses, and regularly worm every three months.

Washing your hands after handling prey

and your hunting dogs should keep you safe.

Vaccinations: Parvovirus causes the loss of the gut lining and bloody diarrhoea, exposure can occur from any contaminated body fluids or direct contact with an infected animal. Vaccinations will prevent risk of contracting this potentially fatal disease. Distemper and Infectious Canine Hepatitis are less common with good community vaccination programs; however, remote populations and wild dogs can see localised areas where infection is a risk. Distemper is a viral disease, which affects the gastrointestinal, respiratory, and central nervous systems in dogs and your ferrets. It is highly contagious, and is often fatal however easily prevented with vaccination. >>

Infectious Hepatitis is also viral and can cause symptoms from sudden death to liver disease, abdominal pain, diarrhoea, jaundice, and bleeding disorders. Foxes and dingoes can be carriers putting your dog at risk. Vaccination is the best method of prevention.

Less common diseases that you may be unaware of that can also be vaccinated for are Carona virus, Leptospirosis and Tetanus. In adult dogs, the majority of Carona infections will be inappetent, with no symptoms to show. Sometimes, a single instance of vomiting and a few days of explosive diarrhoea (liquid, yellow-green or orange) may occur. Fever is typically very rare, while anorexia and depression are more common. Occasionally, an infected dog may also experience some mild respiratory problems. Puppies may exhibit protracted diarrhoea and dehydration, and are most at risk of developing serious complications with this virus. Severe enteritis (inflammation of the small intestine) in puppies will occasionally result in death. 'Lepto' (as it is called) occurs when a dog drinks water contaminated by urine from infected rats, mice, or even native marsupials. Warm weather and swampy conditions facilitate transmission; hence it is more common in Northern Australia, and also rural irrigation areas. The disease can be transmitted to humans, although, so far, no direct dog-to-human transmission has been suspected (i.e. humans try to avoid water contaminated by dog urine!). Clinical signs in dogs include lethargy, vomiting, and diarrhoea, usually associated with a fever. Jaundiced (yellow) gums are common. The onset of signs is usually sudden and the course of the disease is dramatic, with dogs dying within a few days. Different strains occur in Northern Australia compared to further south with each having their own particular vaccination available. Tetanus is a bacterial disease, normally contracted from contaminated soil through an open wound. This may be a puncture wound from a branch or a boar's tooth, to lacerated gums in a teething pup and even from chewing on bones. A nerve toxin leads to muscles spasm and rigidity. Initially the ears will rise on the crown, third eye lids will come across, "lock jaw" may develop and a "saw-horse stance."

Treatment needs to be rapid and aggressive if there is any hope of saving your dog. This is not a disease we would routinely vaccinate against in dogs, but I certainly recommend speaking to your vet about vaccinating your hunting dog due to the increased risk.

Contaminated water can also lead to Giardia (protozoal parasite we are familiar with causing "Bali-Belly") can also cause explosive diarrhoea.

Botulism, Salmonella and E.coli can be contracted from contaminated meat, offal, and water sources. Symptoms may vary from abdominal pain and diarrhoea to severe illness. All off these diseases can affect humans.

Lastly a few nasties that cannot be vaccinated for, Brucellosis and Q-fever.

These diseases used to be the domain of Northern Australia, however with livestock movement, environmental changes, greater numbers of feral animals and hunters prepared to travel, this is no longer the case.

Infected pigs may show no clinical signs or may become lame with swollen joints. Infected boars may develop swollen testicles and there may be reproductive failure. There may be signs of incoordination and hind limb paralysis. Sows may abort and develop sterility. Piglets may be born dead or weak. Infected dogs may not develop clinical signs, but occasionally develop fever, enlarged lymph nodes, and swollen testicles. Humans with brucellosis generally develop signs five

to 60 days after exposure, although in some cases onset is delayed for several months. Symptoms include intermittent fever, sweating, lethargy, loss of appetite, headaches, joint, and body pain. Typically, symptoms persist for two to four weeks, followed by spontaneous recovery. Some people develop chronic 'undulant' fever.

Q-fever: Lungs are thought to be the main source of entry into body. *C. burnetii* will then replicate in the organ's lining, causing widespread inflammation of the dog's blood vessels will result in the death of its blood cells and haemorrhaging of the lungs, liver, and central nervous system. Once the dog has contracted the disease, it may display some of the following symptoms: Fever, Lethargy, inappetence, depression, incoordination and seizures. A dog will most commonly become infected with the organism if it ingests infected bodily fluids (i.e., urine, faeces, milk, discharges), tissues, or diseased carcasses (e.g., those from cattle, sheep, or goats). The bacteria can also become airborne and is transmittable through fleas or lice.

So in short keep your dogs and ferrets up-to-date with vaccinations, parasite control and minimise the risk through controlling feeding of fresh carcass products no matter how tempting it may be, cook, or freeze for prolonged periods to increase safety.



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