

## Protecting your Canine

### Leptospirosis

Lepto is a highly infectious bacterial infection that can affect dogs, humans, livestock and rats.

The bacteria is wide spread in rural areas. It lives in warm, humid areas and is found in water courses. Infection is spread when you or an animal comes into contact with infected water or urine from an infected animal.

Dogs living in rural areas are at most risk of contracting the disease.

In dogs and humans it causes kidney and liver disease. The symptoms are flu like: lethargy, reduced appetite, high temperature, vomiting, diarrhoea. If caught early enough antibiotics will cure the disease. It can be severe and develop into a fatal case of organ failure.

Cattle show symptoms of milk loss and abortion.

There are many different strains of Lepto that can infect multiple species.

**In dogs we can protect against 4 strains of the disease by routine vaccination. The vaccine we use includes emerging strains that are now being identified in our dogs.**

### Ticks.

Ticks are blood sucking parasites that are widely distributed in the local countryside and throughout the UK. These unpleasant parasites are a health risk to all animals as they harbour several serious diseases.

Ticks live in low vegetation and when they sense vibration, warmth and humidity from a passing animal they will climb up the vegetation, attach to the animal and feed on its blood. They engorge on the blood

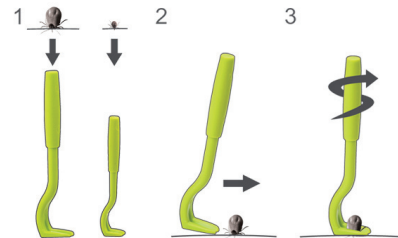
meal over a few days transmitting any diseases it may be carrying through saliva. Once full, the tick will detach.

Dogs and humans can contract Lymes disease from tick bites. The disease attacks the immune system and causes very painful joint disease, heart and nervous disease.

Tick bourn diseases are progressive and difficult to treat. Prevention is better than cure. There are very effective products to control ticks.

If you find a tick on your pet the best action is to kill it by using a prescribed parasite prevention product and leave it to drop off. **Do not pull ticks off**, a tick's head is covered with backward pointing spikes that allow the tick to "anchor" in the skin. By pulling up on the tick, the spikes will rise and lock into the skin.

**To remove a tick use a tick hook to twist the tick gently**, this will bend the spikes and allow removal. It is important to remove the head, leaving it behind can cause infections, abscesses or septicaemia.



**Dalehead Veterinary Group Ltd**  
**Settle North Yorkshire**

**01729 823538**

**[www.daleheadvetgroup.co.uk](http://www.daleheadvetgroup.co.uk)**

**Follow us on** 

**[info@daleheadvetgroup.co.uk](mailto:info@daleheadvetgroup.co.uk)**



**Your Dog and the  
Countryside**



# The Countryside Code.

The countryside code says you should keep your dog on a lead when walking in rural areas. This is equally as important for you and your pets safety as well as the welfare of the livestock and wildlife.

Unfortunately in recent years there has been an increase in incidents of people being injured by cattle whilst walking dogs and an increase in dogs worrying sheep.

We have outlined some of the major factors to consider when you are enjoying the countryside with your canine family members.

## Keep your dog on a lead whilst walking through sheep fields and avoid walking in fields with newly lambed sheep.

Most sheep are herded by trained working sheep dogs so will naturally run away when they see a dog. All dogs have the instinct to run after another moving animal, in our pet dogs this will usually be in a playful way. The excitement in this play mode is heightened when the animal keeps running, the mouthing play the most dogs show at this point can cause considerable damage in sheep. Chasing behaviour is great fun for your dog and highly addictive. When repeated, this behaviour will always turn into either herding or hunting instincts depending on the make up of the dog.

### Responsible dog owners will consider the following:

- Heavily pregnant sheep stressed by being moved too fast or too far will abort.
- Ewes with young lambs that are moved by a dog can lose contact with their lambs. If they are not reunited within hours the lamb will not feed, get cold and can die.

- Most dogs if not under control will chase sheep. Straying dogs, even the most gentle family pet, can develop the hunting instinct when chasing sheep and playful chasing can quickly turn into worrying.

## Keep your dog on a lead and under control whilst walking through fields with cattle.

Cattle are naturally inquisitive. They are likely to follow you as you walk across the field. Their reaction towards the dog will depend on the dogs body language and whether the cows are used to being herded by a trained working dog. Their behaviour can vary from curiosity to playfulness, where they dance around waiting to be chased. They may try to nudge your dog with their heads to avoid being herded.

Cows with calves can be very protective, the maternal instinct can be so strong that they try to chase anything they see as a threat, canine or human! They can be aggressive.

### If you encounter a field of cattle on a walk:

- See if there is an alternative route round the field to avoid any possible situation.
- If not: Walk calmly around the cows in the field. Keeping your dog on a lead under close control.
- Never approach a cow that has a calf.
- Should the cattle approach, keep walking calmly, don't run unless you are in danger.
- If the cattle get too boisterous or show any aggression and you feel threatened, let your dog off the lead. Move quickly to safety in a different direction to your dog. Any dog fit enough to be out walking in the countryside will be quick enough to outrun cows and get to safety.

### Wildlife.

Nesting birds and young wildlife can be seriously harmed and killed by even the most innocent dog which investigates in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Ground nesting birds have their young from April to the end of July. Some common nesting sites will have signs warning you to keep your dog on a lead. If your not sure be safe and keep your dog on a lead.



## Dog mess, Bag it and bin it.

Dog faeces from healthy dogs can spread disease to people, wildlife and livestock as well as between other dogs. There are 3 main diseases that dogs, with no symptoms, can pass to other animals in their faeces.

### Neospora Caninum & Sarcocystosis

Both are protozoan parasites.

Dogs are infected with both diseases by eating contaminated birth materials from livestock or raw meat. Many infected dogs show no symptoms. However bitches can pass Neospora to their puppies and they can then develop lameness and paralysis. The disease can often be fatal.

Infected dogs excrete oocysts from Neospora and Sarcocystosis in their faeces. These contaminate the environment and are then eaten by grazing livestock.

Neospora causes abortion and still births in cattle. The cattle are infected for life resulting in significant losses in the cattle industry.

Sarcocystis caused cysts throughout the body. It rarely causes disease in livestock but it does cause the meat to be damaged and the carcass to be condemned. This is mainly seen in sheep.

There are no vaccines available to control either disease and no treatments for the disease in livestock.

**Always pick up your dog's faeces and remove it.**

**Don't leave it in the fields.**