

# Erlichiosis

## **What is Ehrlichiosis?**

Ehrlichiosis is the general name used to describe diseases caused by bacteria that are spread to animals primarily through the bite of infected ticks. The disease can cause muscle aches, upset stomach, and lethargy in its early stages but can lead to serious conditions such as uncontrollable bleeding, respiratory failure, and eventually death.

## **Can I Prevent my Dog from Catching Ehrlichiosis?**

There are many flea/tick preventative medicines (both topical and oral) that can be used to prevent ticks from biting and attaching themselves to your dog. The dosage will depend on the size of your dog. Please ask us at Jasper's Utila Animal Shelter for advice and to help you get the preventatives you need.

Does my dog have Ehrlichiosis?

Signs and symptoms of ehrlichiosis typically begin within 1-2 weeks after the bite of an infected tick. Early signs and symptoms (the first 5 days of illness) are usually mild or moderate and may include:

- Muscle aches (tender when walking or on contact)
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, loss of appetite
- Lethargy

Signs and symptoms of severe (late stage) illness can include:

- Respiratory failure
- Uncontrolled bleeding
- Organ failure
- Death

## **Ehrlichiosis Treatment**

Treatment works best when this disease is caught early, so make sure you get your dog tested if they are showing any of the symptoms. A course of the antibiotic Doxycycline is administered in a dosage appropriate for the size of your dog.