

Pet **Tips**



**Presented
by
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Do You Know What *Erhlichia* is?

Most dog owners don't. It is a disease transmitted by the brown dog tick, which is fairly common in Oklahoma.

Dogs infected with this organism may be lethargic, lose weight, show less interest in food and become anemic. Other possible signs include hemorrhages under the skin or around the gums, swollen lymph nodes, muscular or joint soreness, nasal discharge or nosebleeds, severe neck or back pain, blood in the urine and eye problems. Some dogs will experience seizures and difficulty walking.

Some dogs may show only minor symptoms of *Erhlichia*, but occasionally a dog will suddenly develop an acute or rapid onset on symptoms.

Erhlichia can be diagnosed with a routine blood test that we recommend be done yearly along with your dogs heart worm test. Treatment can be accomplished with oral antibiotics or injectable medications. Be aware that your dog may need to have additional tests performed each year to insure that they have not been newly exposed to the disease.

Prevention is an important factor as well. Topical tick preventatives can lessen the likelihood that your dog will be bitten and exposed. Knowing that you have an *Erhlichia* positive tick population can also help keep you healthy. If you develop flu like symptoms that simply will not go away and know your dog has been exposed, you can take that information to your own physician and receive treatment if necessary.

P.S. Bring in this column and receive \$10 off the purchase of six months worth of Advantix. Must have had an exam within the last year at our clinic. Offer expires 1/15/08.

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