



# *Brucella canis*: Positive Dog Guidance



## THE TOUGH DECISION

There is no effective treatment for dogs infected with *B. canis*. Often these animals will initially look perfectly healthy, but over time they may develop infections in their spine, eyes and other organs. Some animals may clear the infection after 2-5 years, but there is no guarantee and it is very difficult to determine if a dog is free of the disease.

Regardless of how healthy they look, *B. canis* infected dogs will shed the bacteria on and off. Most is shed in vaginal discharge during whelping, abortion and heats, and in the semen and urine of male dogs. Unfortunately, even spayed and neutered dogs may shed the bacteria in their feces, urine, saliva, milk and blood.

Because infected dogs are a danger to other dogs and people, it is strongly recommended that these animals be euthanized. This is a heartbreaking decision, that should be made in consultation with your veterinarian and the Utah State Veterinarian's Office.

## RISK TO PEOPLE

*B. canis* can cause infection in people. Follow the steps below to keep you and your family safe around dogs carrying the disease.

## LIVING WITH A POSITIVE DOG

### Sterilization

- It is **STRONGLY RECOMMENDED** that infected dogs are immediately spayed / neutered

### Lifetime Isolation

- Your positive dog can never have contact with any other dogs
- They must be kept on your property at all times with no outside visitors

### Personal Protection

- See [“\*Brucella canis\*: Prevention and Control” document](#)

### Treatment

- The decision to treat is dependent on your veterinarian
- Treatment may be months to years long, expensive, and in most cases does not result in a cure

### Declaration

- You must let us know what you decide to do with your positive dog
- You must notify anyone who may come in contact with your dog that they are positive, especially veterinarians, their staff and visitors to your home