

Meopham Veterinary Hospital, Sevenoaks, Swanscombe & Tonbridge Brucellosis Practice Protocol

Dear pet owner,

You are receiving this letter as either you have a dog that has been imported or have informed us you have travelled/are travelling to and from one of the countries listed below.

Canine Brucellosis is a contagious bacterial infection caused by the bacterium, *Brucella Canis* (*B. Canis*). This bacterial infection is highly contagious between dogs. It is a zoonotic disease which means it is an infectious disease that is transmitted between species from animals to humans.

Due to the increasing number of dogs imported from Eastern Europe, which led Public Health England to publish a risk statement in February 2021, and the Zoonotic risks it poses to our staff, this has resulted in us carrying out a risk assessment and implementing stricter measures. These policies are echoed by many of the UK veterinary referral centres and more & more first opinion practices across the UK.

The link below will direct you to the advice sheet produced by the government which details the clinical signs, route of transmission & how to manage infected dogs.

[Brucella canis: information for the public and dog owners - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/561231/Brucella_canis_information_for_the_public_and_dog_owners.pdf)

For your information, this policy is relevant if your pet has been imported, or has travelled/is travelling to and from any of the countries listed below.

European countries:

Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, Ukraine & Uzbekistan

Other countries:

Canada, USA & The Middle East

Additional Continents:

Asia & Africa

If your pet has been imported, has travelled/is travelling to and from one of the above countries then we will need you to agree to the terms outlined within this policy in order for us to accept them as a patient of ours. Failure to agree to these terms will mean you will need to register for this pet's veterinary services elsewhere.

This policy has been created solely for the health & safety of our staff & colleagues and we hope you understand that this has to be our priority. Those at highest risk of developing clinical signs are

children, immunocompromised people & those that are pregnant. It is unsure how Brucella will affect pregnancies, however adverse pregnancy outcomes are possible.

We would strongly recommend all animals arriving in the UK from abroad, particularly if imported from one of the countries named above, are not walked in public areas & are restricted to your own garden only until they have a negative Brucellosis test, waiting at least 3 months until after the animal's arrival into the UK.

Unfortunately a negative Brucellosis test can be a false negative, therefore it is not until 3 months after the animal has arrived in the UK that we can trust a negative to be a true negative. This is to ensure any incubation of disease when leaving the country has had the opportunity to develop, antibodies are produced 2-12 weeks post infection.

Terms & conditions

- Upon registration, if your pet has been in the country for less than 3 months, we will schedule them in for a Brucellosis blood test. This will be our last routine appointment of the day, at a branch of your choice. You will wait outside, with your pet in the car, until you are called in for your appointment. Our staff members will wear the appropriate PPE when handling your pet, this will include gloves, overalls & a visor. The blood sample will be sent away to a lab for testing for Brucella.
- The fee for this blood test is £111.50.
- As soon as the results are back then they will be reported via telephone to you.
- As noted above, if the result is negative we will schedule your pet in for a second test 3 months later. The cost for this additional test is £61.35.
- The only exception to this is if your animal has already been in the UK for 3 months, then only 1 x test is required at the initial cost.
- We are only able to offer emergency treatment for your pet until such time that they have been in the UK for more than 3 months AND have a negative brucellosis blood serum test after 3 months of being in the UK. If your pet presents for treatment before this time then our staff will wear full PPE & this will be chargeable. We will not perform any routine or elective procedures within this initial period.
- If you do not agree to the terms within this letter then we will not be able to register your pet with our veterinary services and would advise you register elsewhere.
- If you travel to an affected country as listed above, your dog will be required to have Brucella bloods 3 months after arriving back in the UK. Only emergency treatment will be offered during this time. The cost of this is £111.50.
- If you travel to an affected country multiple times a year, then Brucella testing is required annually to stay registered with us. The cost if this is £111.50.

This protocol can be found on our website, visit <https://www.meophamvets.co.uk/brucellosis/>