



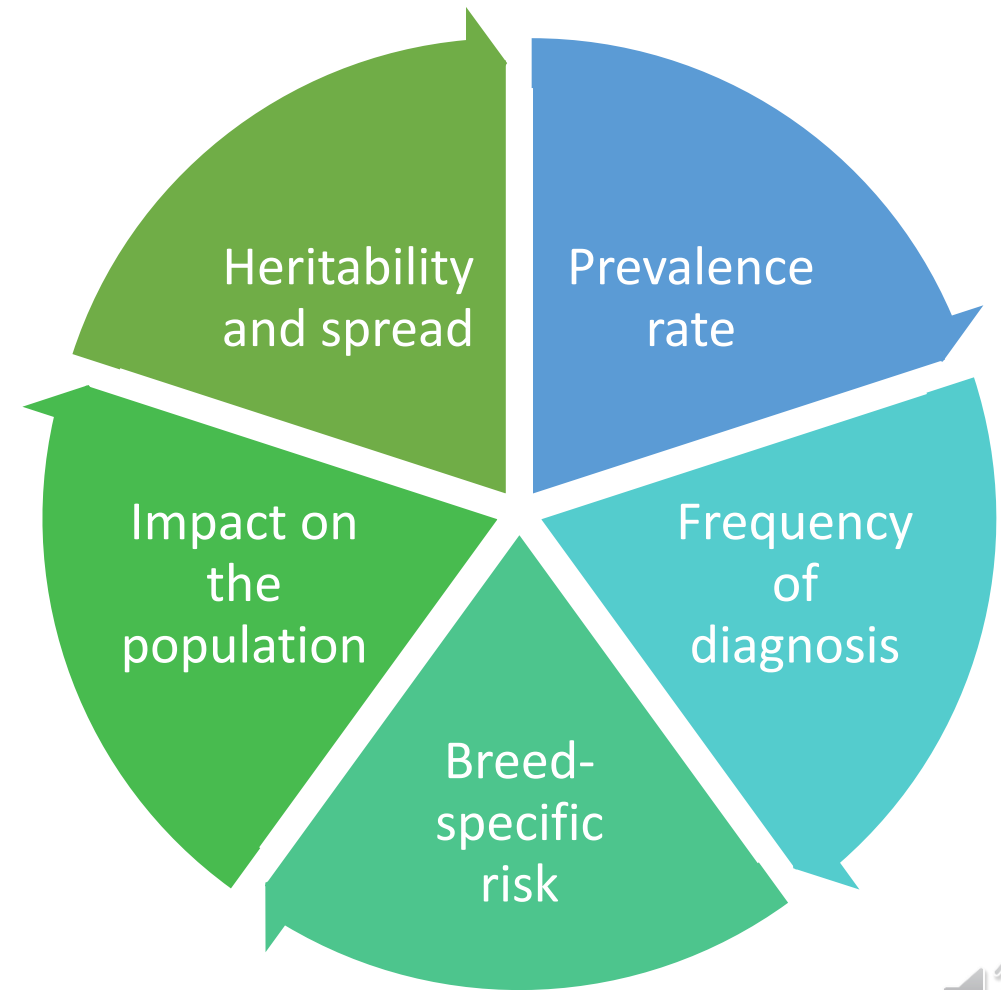
# Common Health Problems in Dogs

# Learning Outcomes

- What makes a condition considered common
- Memorising techniques
- Categorising health conditions
- Common canine health conditions
  - Symptoms
  - Diagnosis
  - How the condition may affect the grooming process



What makes a health condition common?



# Memorising techniques

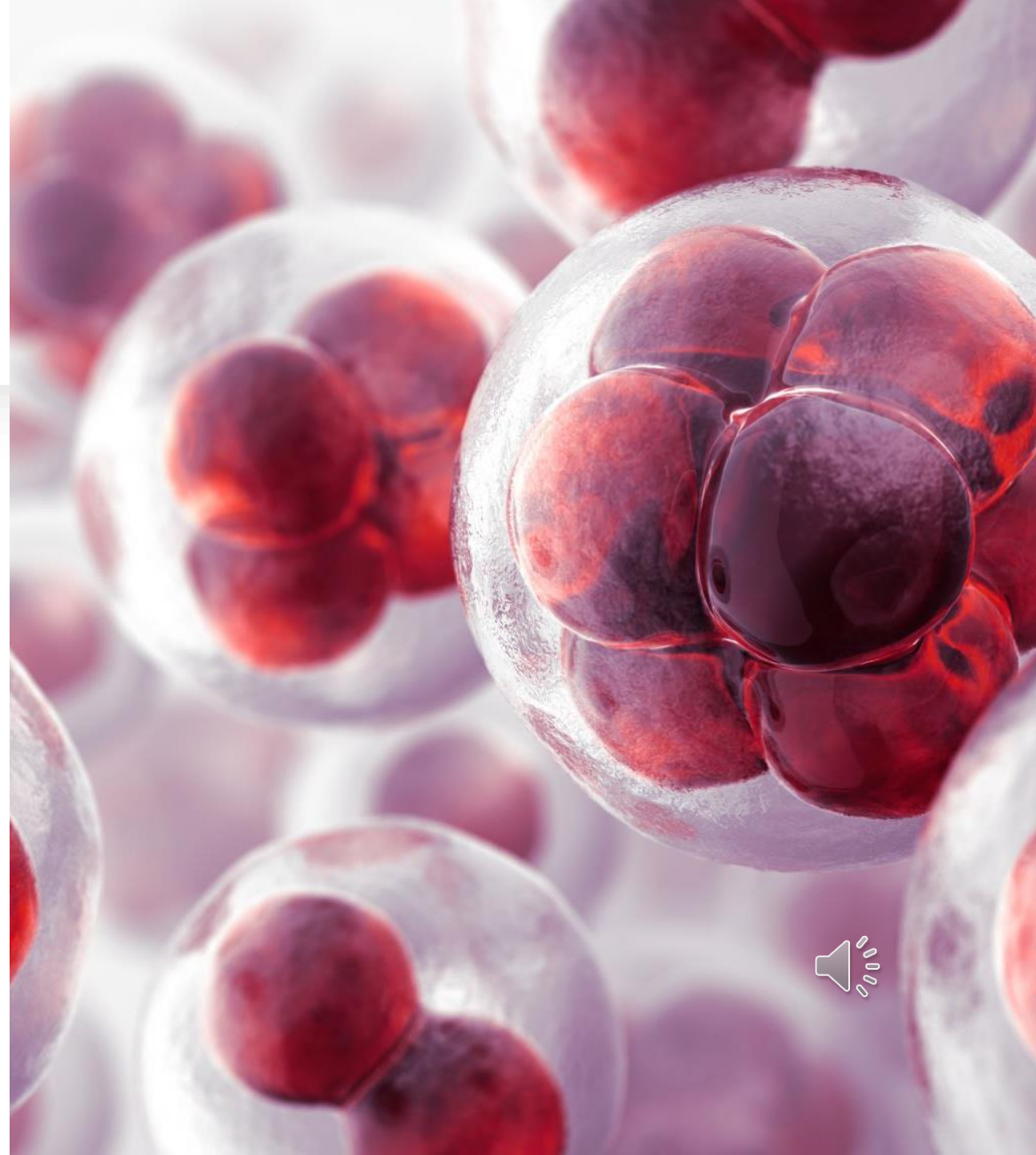
- Note taking
- Assigning a visual
- Doodle finishing
- Movement



# Disease

*noun*

1. a disorder of structure or function in a human, animal, or plant, especially one that has a known cause and a distinctive group of symptoms, signs, or [anatomical](#) changes.



# Disorder

*noun*

- an illness or condition that disrupts normal physical or mental functions.



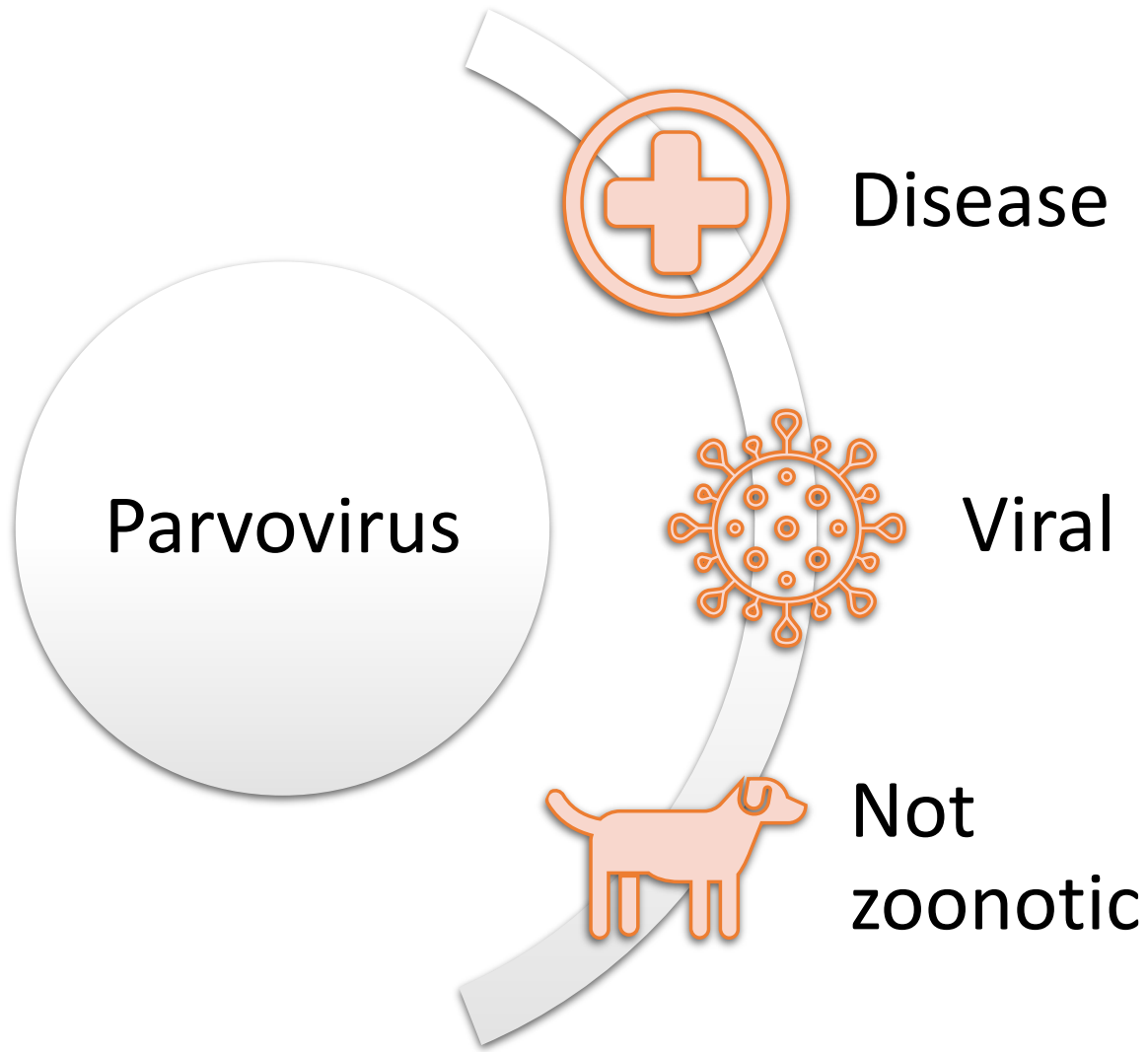
# Disability

---

*noun*

- a physical or mental condition that limits a person's movements, [senses](#), or activities.





Transmission: direct contact with infected faeces, contaminated surfaces or infected environment

Symptoms: vomiting, diarrhoea (often bloody), lethargy, fever, loss of appetite, and dehydration

Health Risks: dehydration, sepsis and death

Treatment: emergency vet care

Prevention: via vaccination and broad-spectrum disinfectant



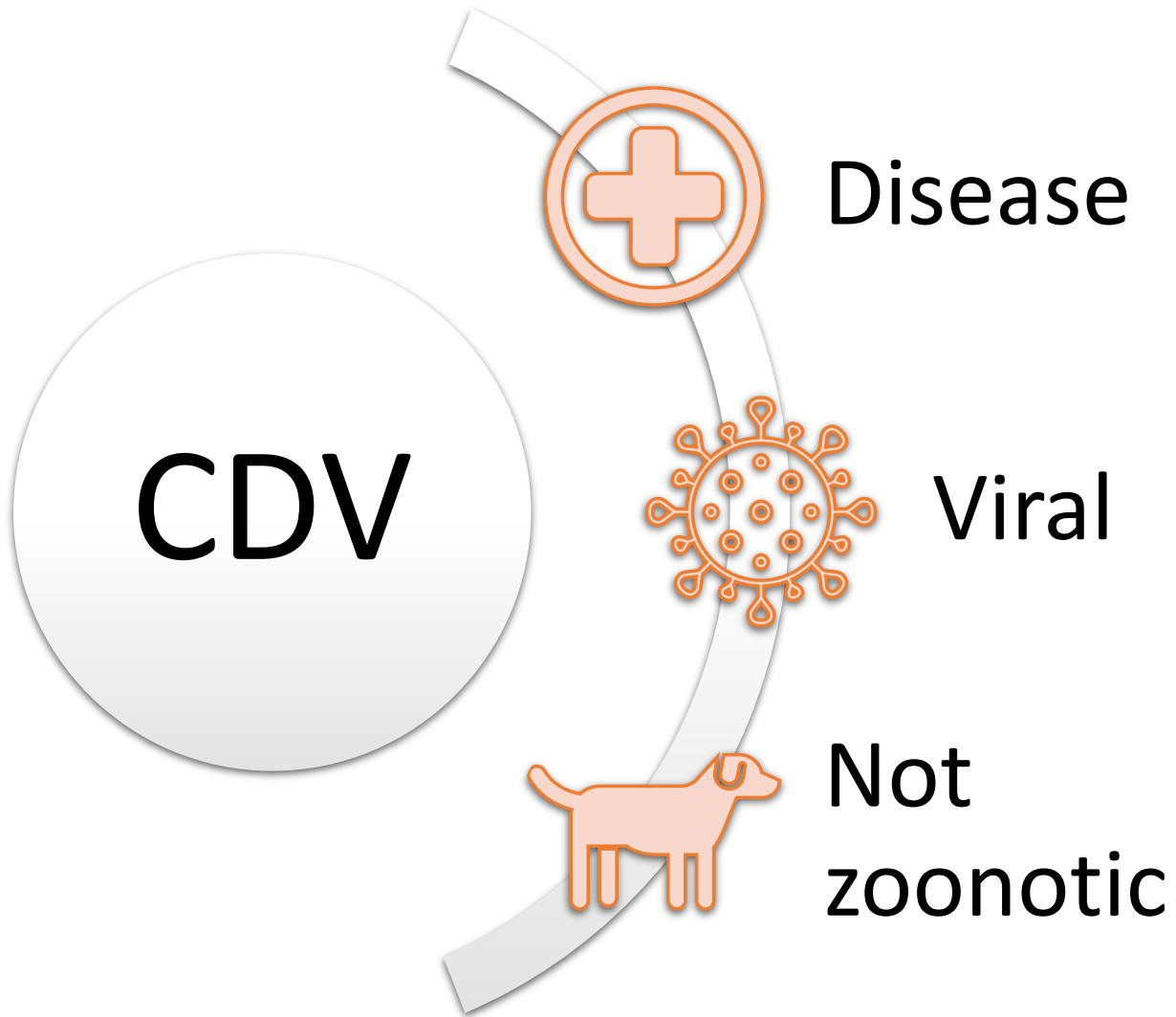
How long can  
parvovirus survive in  
the environment?



The answer is:

Months





Transmission: Airborne

Early symptoms: fever, nasal discharge, eye discharge, coughing, lethargy, loss of appetite, and gastrointestinal upset

Health Risks: severe neurological damage, permanent disability, death

Treatment: supportive care as it is incurable

Prevention: vaccination and broad-spectrum disinfectant



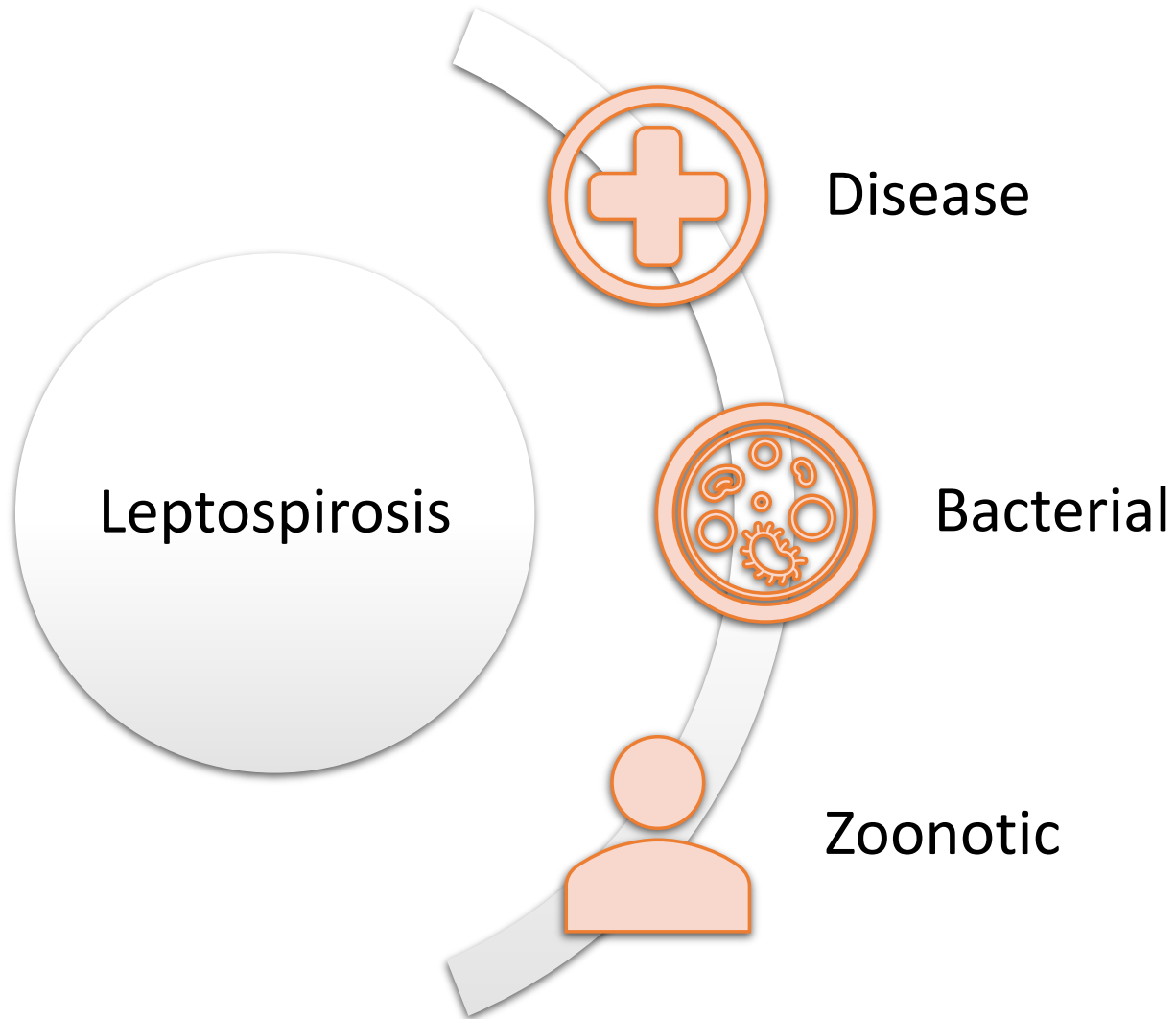
How is CDV spread?



The answer is:

Via respiratory  
droplets





Transmission: Direct contact with contaminated soil, water or infected urine

Symptoms: fever, muscle tenderness, vomiting, diarrhoea, loss of appetite, jaundice, increased thirst, and lethargy,

Health Risks: kidney and liver failure, death

Treatment: antibiotics, supportive vet care, quarantine

Prevention: vaccine, broad-spectrum disinfectant

Known as Weil's disease in humans



How can dogs  
become infected  
with leptospirosis?

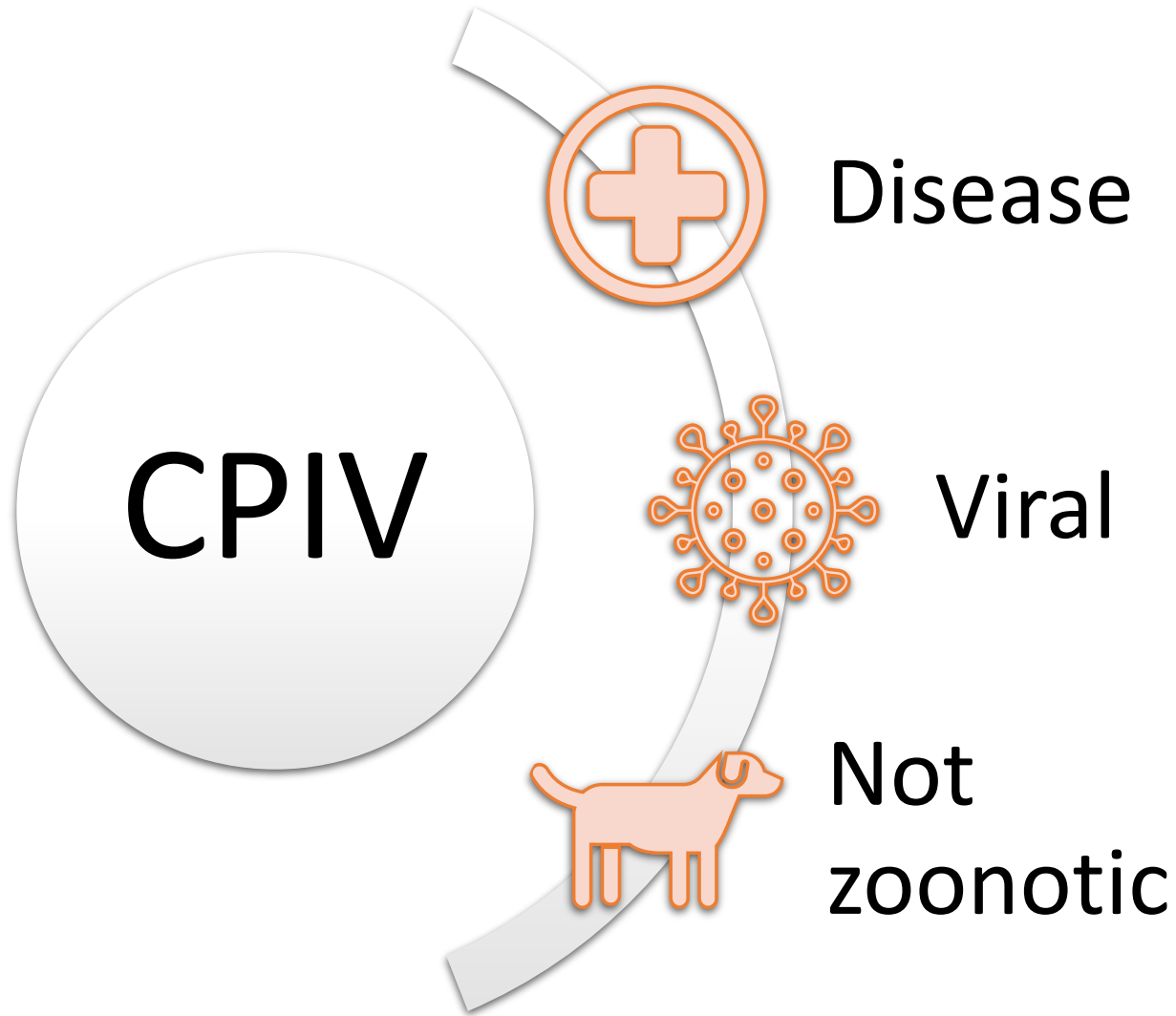


The answer is:

By coming into contact  
with contaminated soil,  
water or infected urine







Transmission: Airborne

Symptoms: coughing, nasal discharge, sneezing, and sometimes fever and lethargy

Health Risks: weakened immune system, secondary bacterial infections

Treatment: supportive vet care, quarantine

Prevention: vaccine, broad-spectrum disinfectant

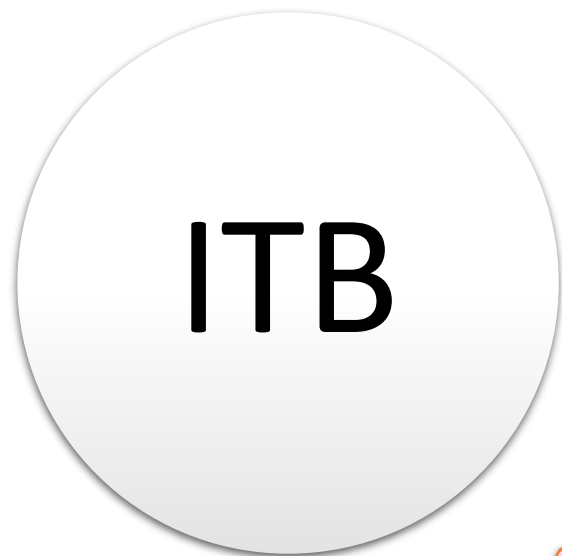
What should you do if you  
have groomed a dog that  
may have been infected  
with CPIV?



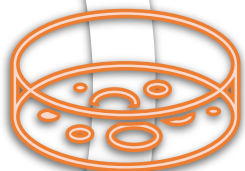
The answer is:

Clean all surfaces with a  
broad-spectrum  
disinfectant (like Virkon S)  
and aerate the salon.

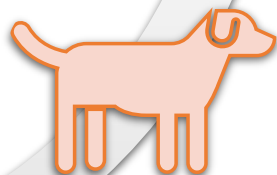




Disease



Viral/  
Bacterial




Rarely  
zoonotic

Transmission: Airborne and close contact

Symptoms: honking, sneezing, runny nose, eye discharge, and occasionally fever and lethargy

Health Risks: pneumonia in puppies, elderly dogs, or immunocompromised dogs

Treatment: rest and supportive care, or vet care for severe or secondary infections

Prevention: vaccine, broad-spectrum disinfectant 

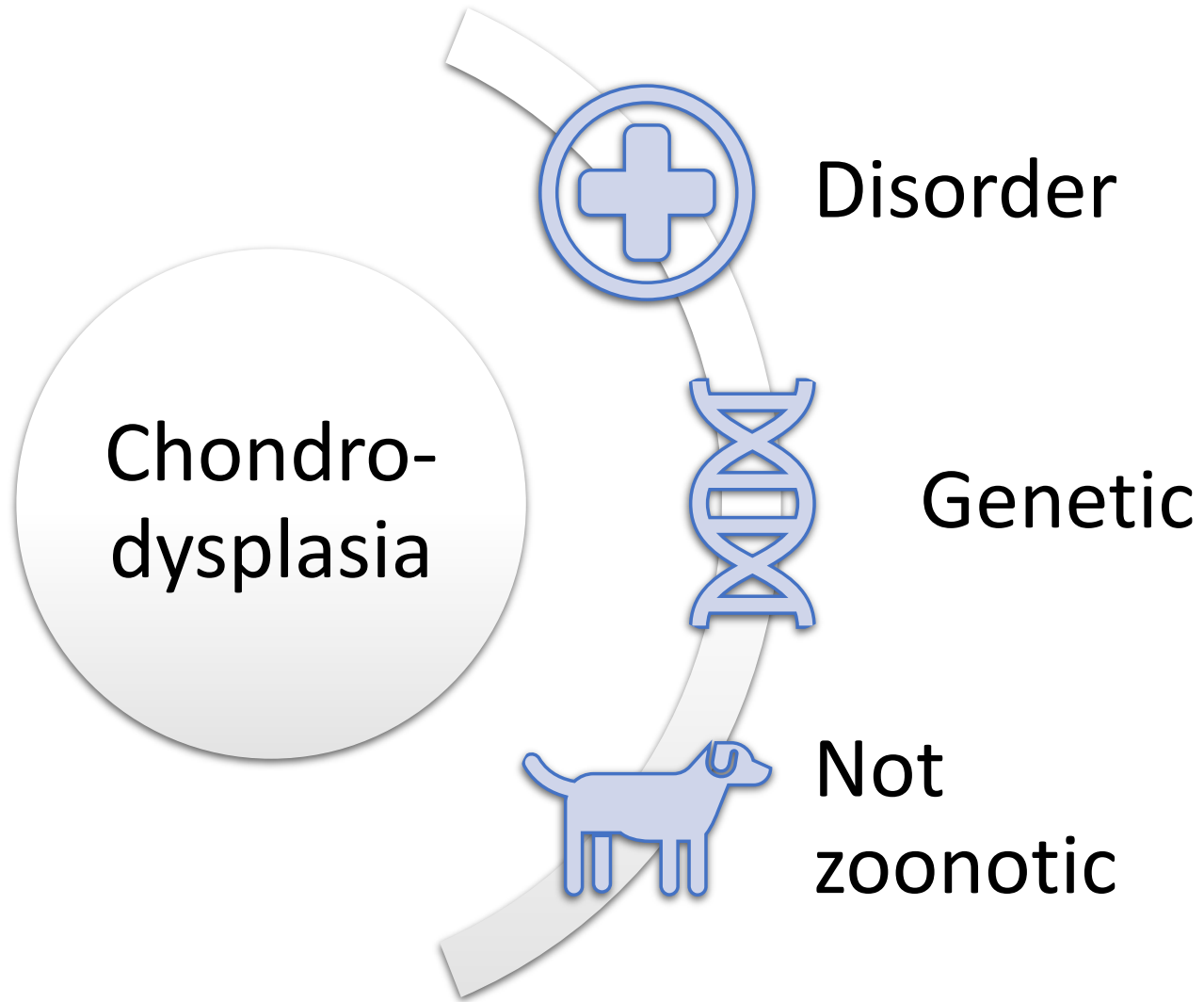
Why do you need to know  
if your client's dog has  
recently had a kennel  
cough vaccine?



The answer is:

Because the vaccine is a live vaccine and sheds for several weeks after administration, potentially putting people with weakened immune systems at risk.





Symptoms: short, bowed limbs, abnormal limb alignment, joint pain, and possible difficulty walking

Health Risks: joint pain, arthritis, intervertebral disc disease, and other joint issues

Treatment: supportive care and joint supplements

Prevention: selective breeding practices to avoid propagating the condition



# Safe handling

- Support the spine
- Lower levels
- Minimise stretching
- Ensure surface is non-slip
- Avoid pressure on the neck and spine
- Support the spine when lifting





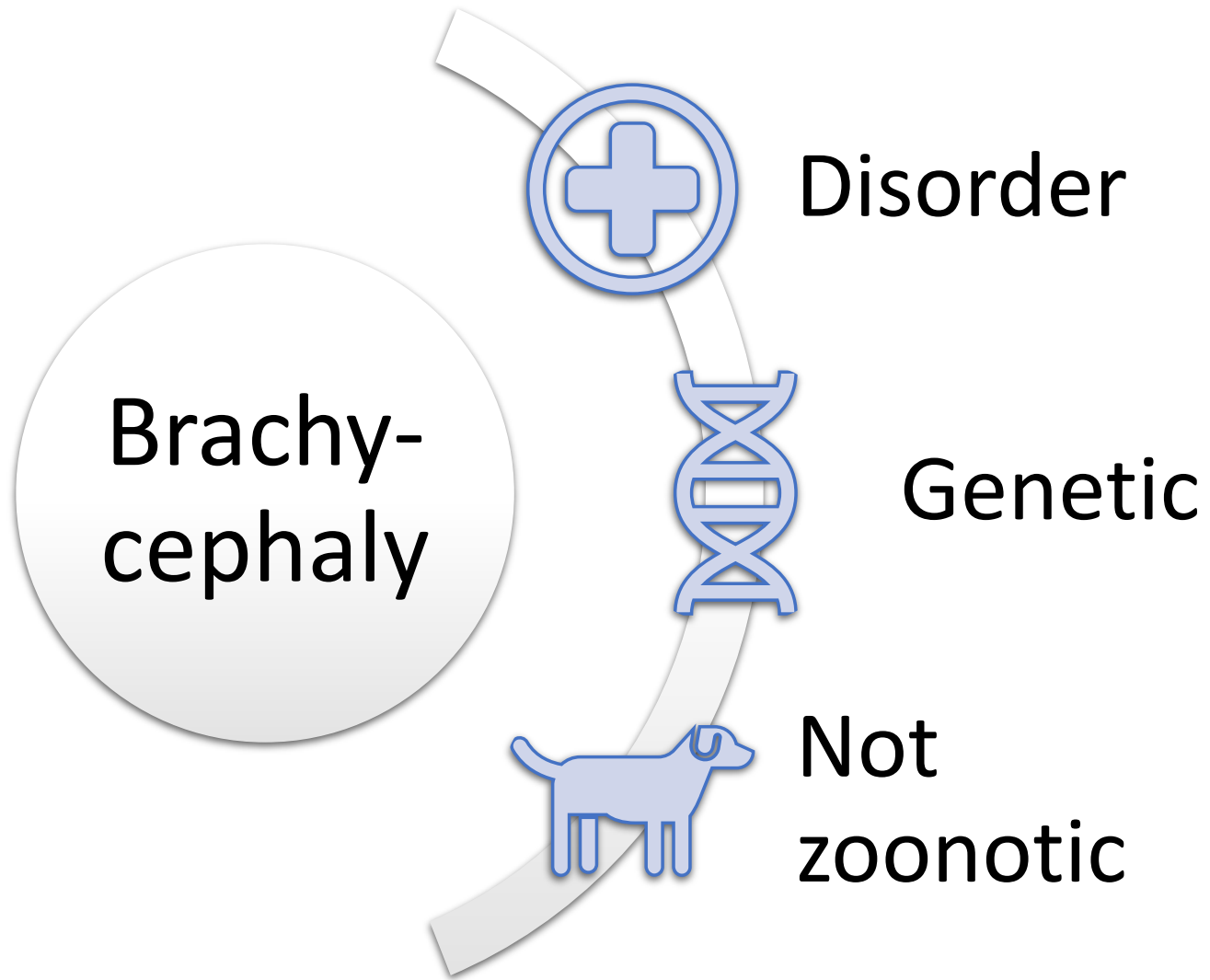
Why is it important to keep the spine straight and supported when lifting a chondrodysplastic dog?



The answer is:

because their long backs and short legs make them prone to spinal injuries, such as **intervertebral disc disease (IVDD)**. Lifting without proper support can put excessive strain on the spine, increasing the risk of slipped discs, pain, or even paralysis. Supporting both the chest and hindquarters evenly helps distribute weight properly and prevents unnatural bending or twisting of the spine.





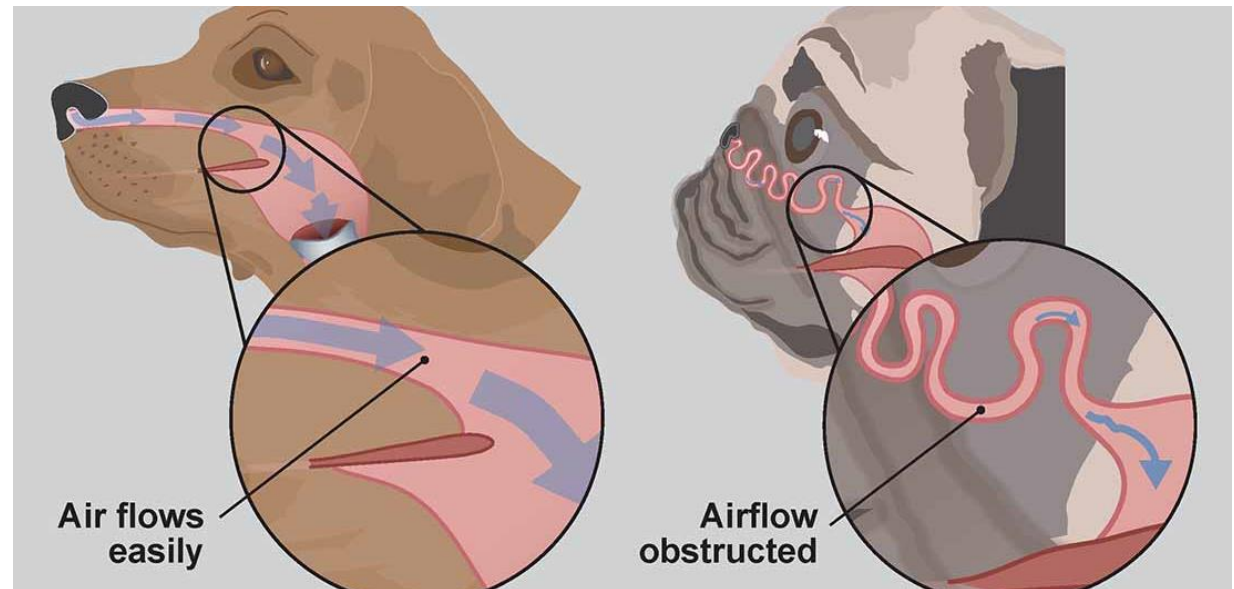
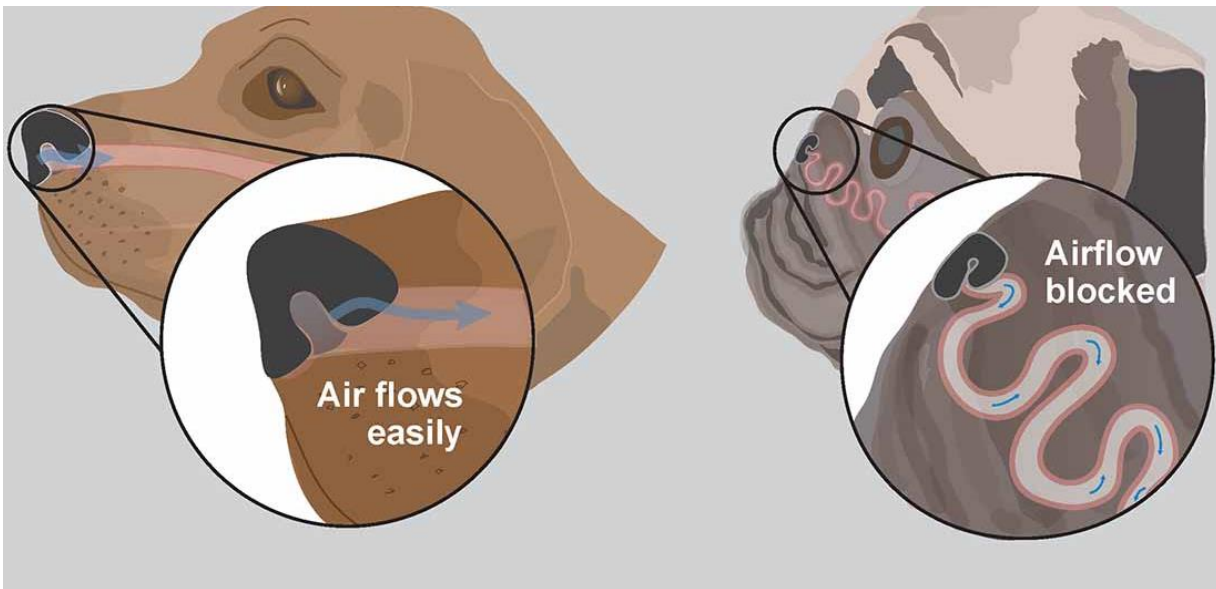
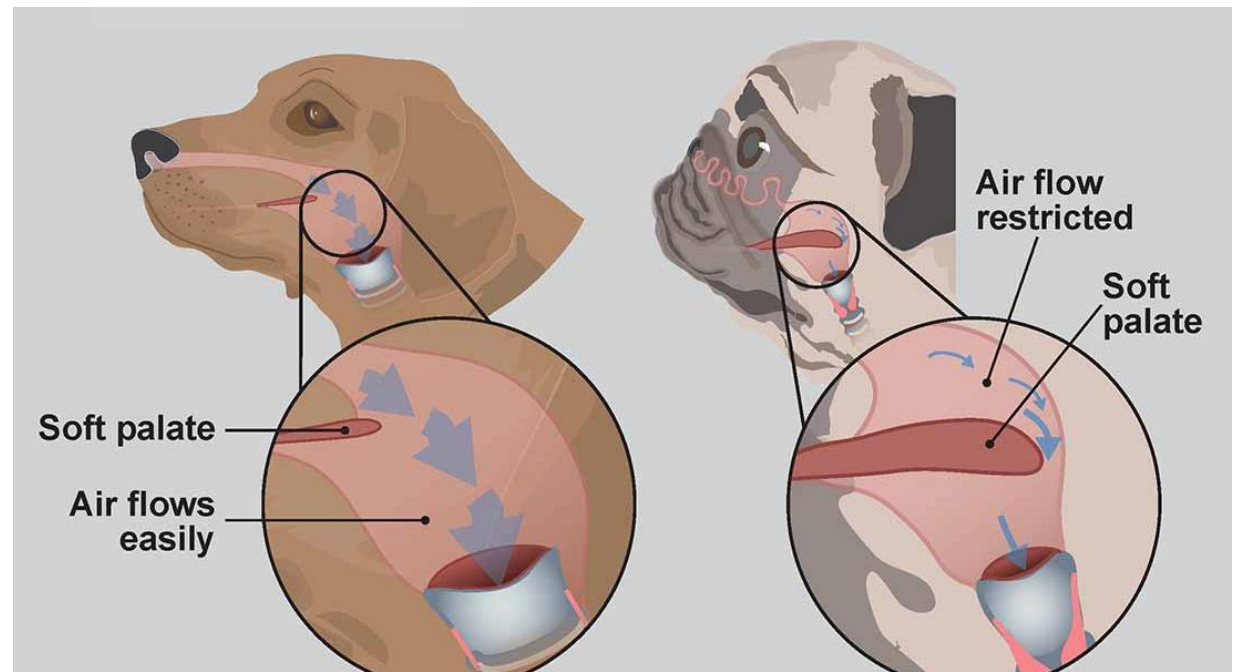
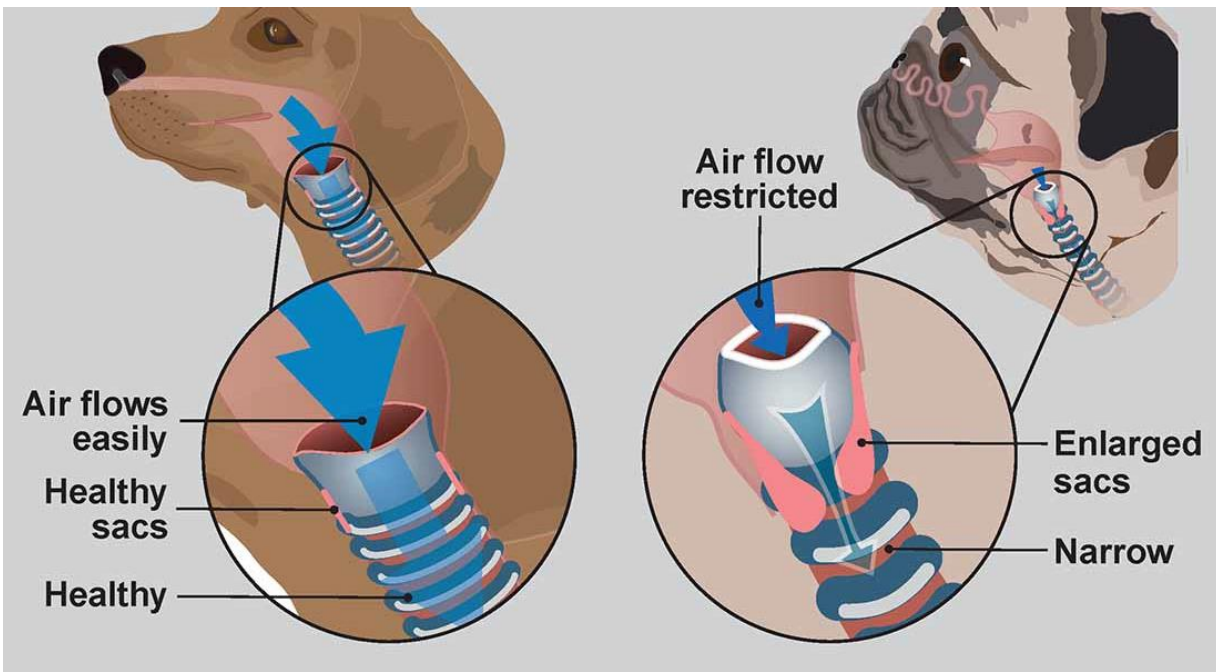
Symptoms: breathing difficulties, snoring, excessive panting, intolerance to heat, frequent respiratory infections, and, in severe cases, obstructive breathing

Health Risks: heatstroke, respiratory distress, and complications from exercise or stress. They may also be prone to dental crowding, skin fold infections, and eye injuries

Treatment: avoiding strenuous exercise, maintaining a cool environment, and minimizing stress. Severe cases may require surgery to improve airway function.

Prevention: selective breeding practices to avoid propagating the condition





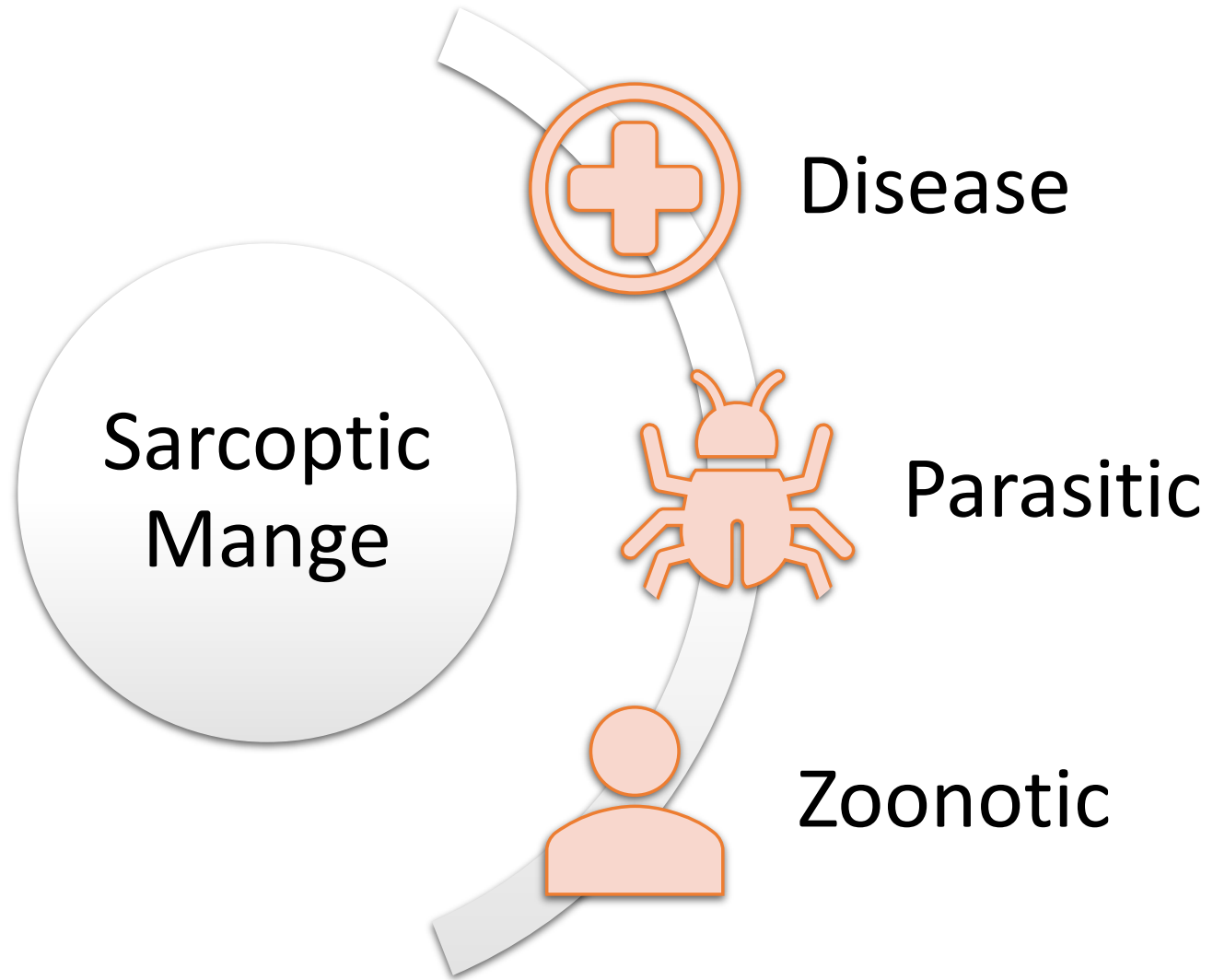
Why is it important to use  
a harness instead of a  
noose when grooming a  
brachycephalic dog?



The answer is:

A grooming noose around the neck can put pressure on the trachea, restricting airflow and increasing the risk of breathing distress or collapse, as well as overheating and stress, which can further exacerbate their breathing problems. A harness distributes restraint more evenly across the chest and body, reducing strain on the airway and ensuring a safer, more comfortable grooming experience.





Transmission: Direct contact

Symptoms: intense itching, redness, hair loss, skin inflammation, sores, and crusty patches on the skin

Health Risks: severe skin infections, weight loss, and overall poor health

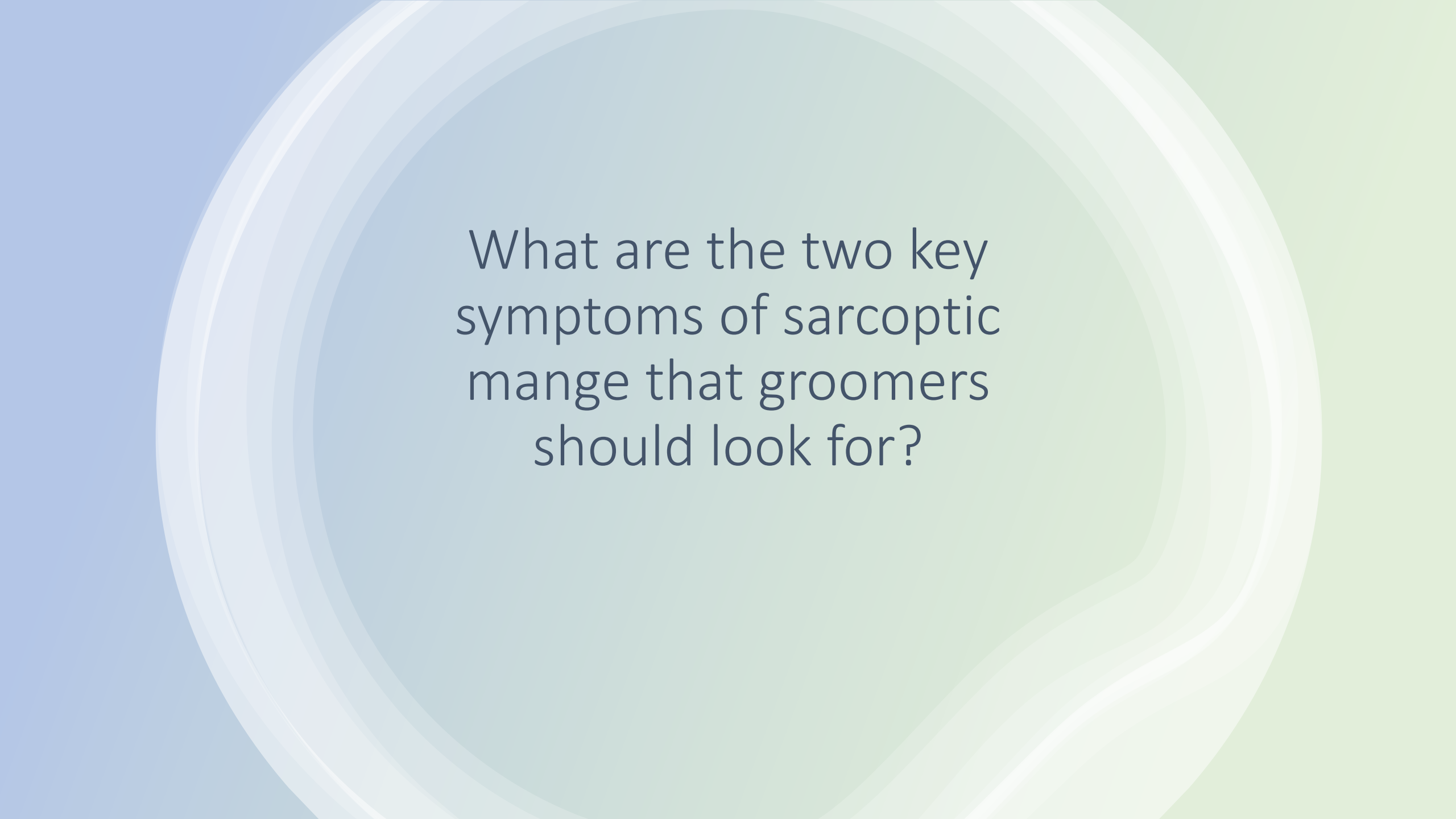
Treatment: medicated baths, topical treatments, or oral medications

Prevention: health care and spot-on 



[Credit: Joel Milla via Wikimedia Commons](#) 

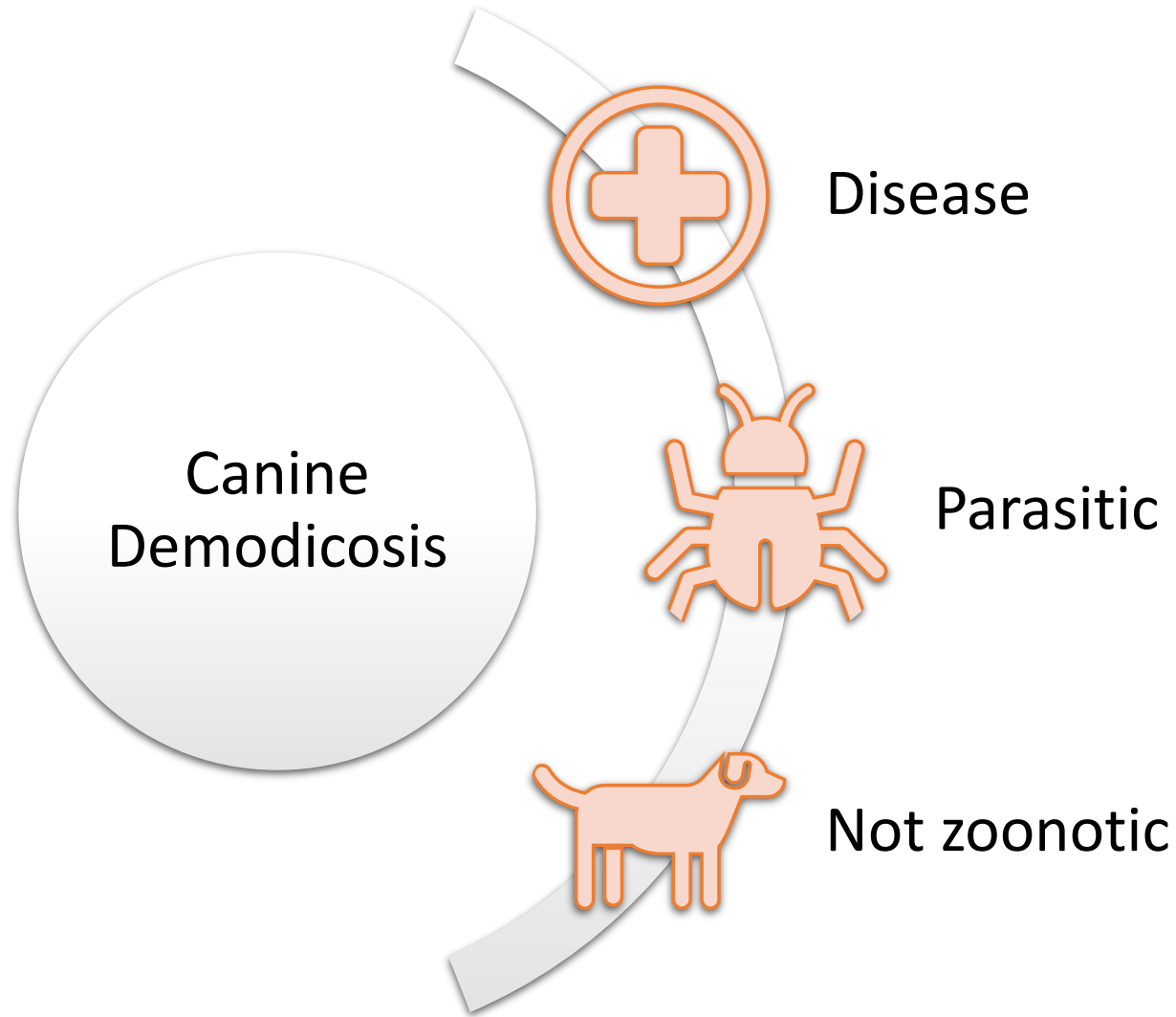




What are the two key symptoms of sarcoptic mange that groomers should look for?

The answer is:

Intense itching such as scratching, biting and chewing its skin, and bald patches or skin sores, usually around the ears, elbows and belly



Transmission: Direct contact with mother

Symptoms: hair loss, thickened skin, itching

Health Risks: secondary bacterial infections, skin inflammation, and severe discomfort

Treatment: medicated baths, topical treatments, or oral medications

Prevention: maintain a healthy immune system, prompt vet treatment

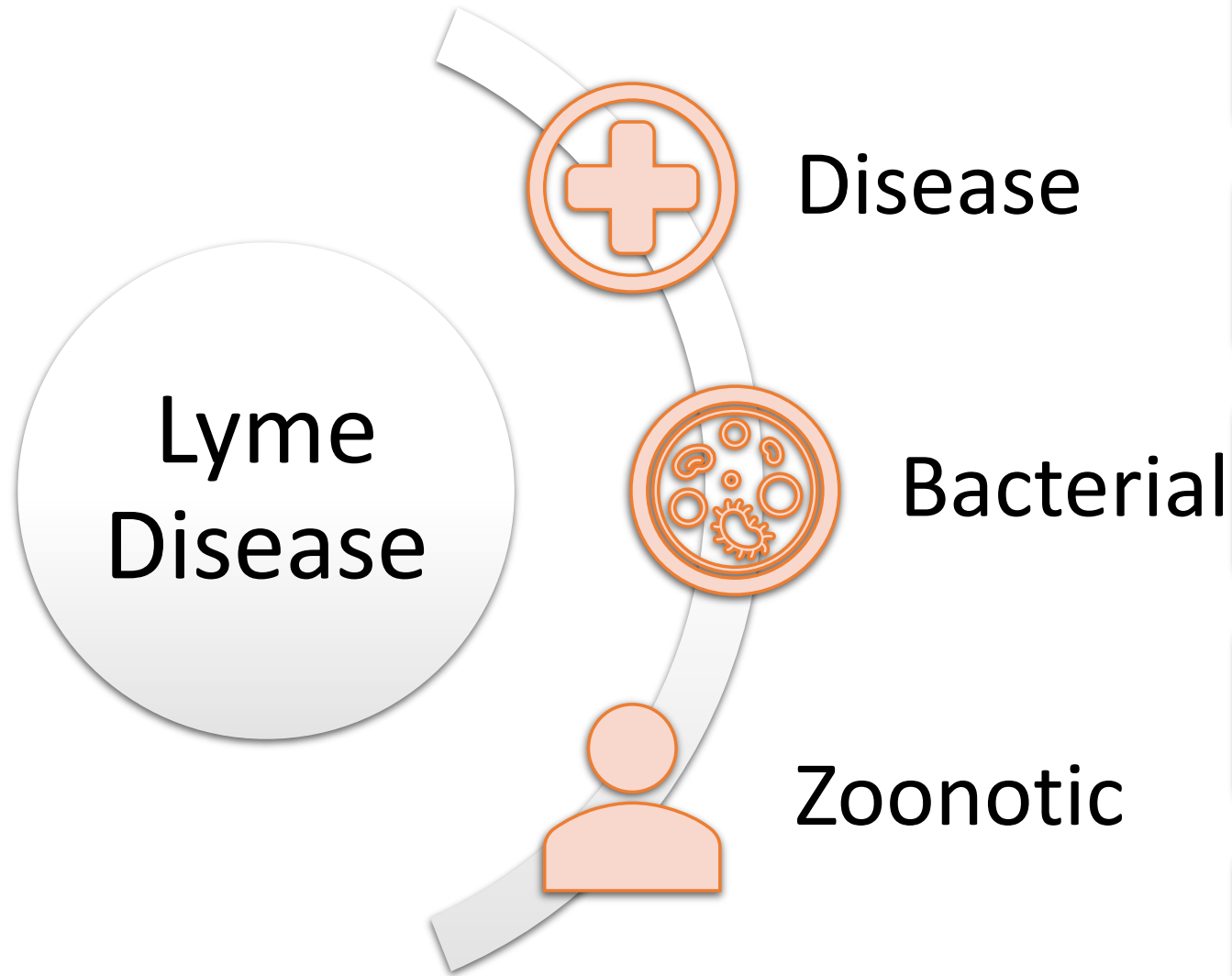
Unlike sarcoptic mange,  
demodectic mange is not  
zoonotic.  
*True or False?*



The answer is:

True





Transmission: Bite of infected tick

Symptoms: fever, lameness, fidgeting, joint swelling, loss of appetite, lethargy, kidney problems, or none at all

Health Risks: chronic joint problems, kidney damage (Lyme nephritis)

Treatment: antibiotics, pain relief and anti-inflammatory

Prevention: tick prevention, possibly vaccine



Do all tick bites  
cause Lyme disease?

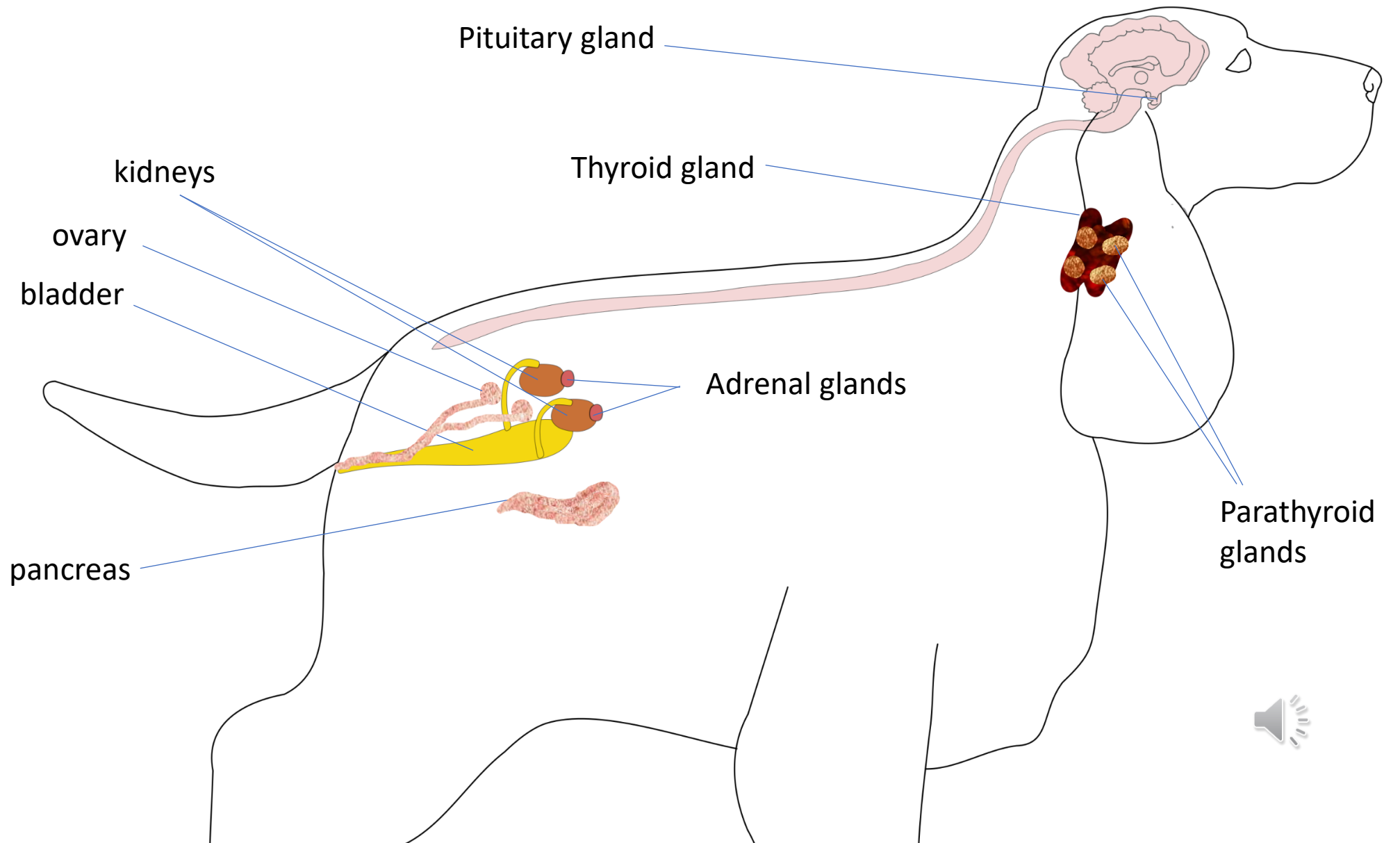


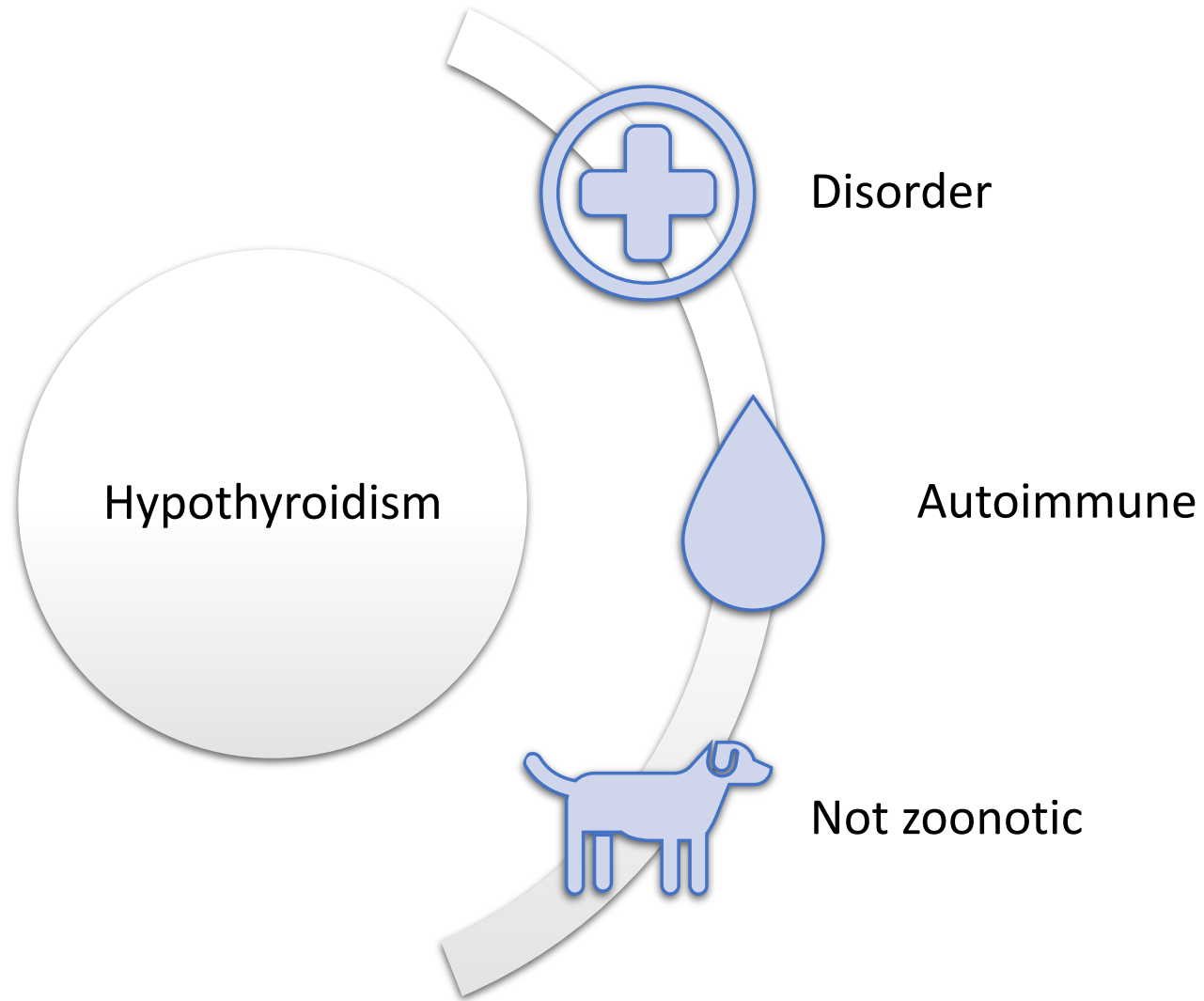


The answer is:

No, not all ticks carry Lyme disease, and dogs may not develop Lyme disease even if they are bitten by an infected tick. Regular tick prevention and prompt removal of ticks are key to reducing the risk of Lyme disease.







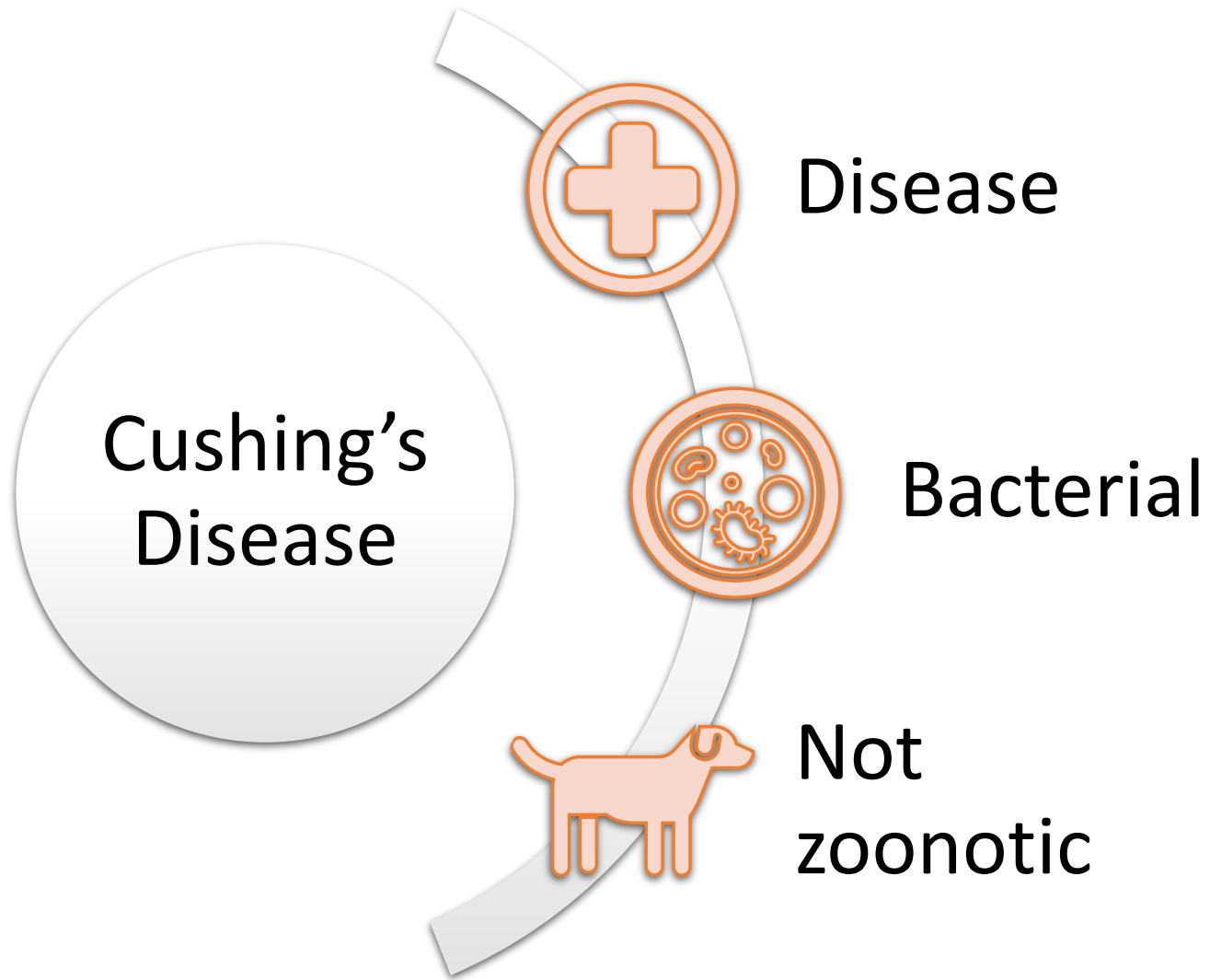
Symptoms: lethargy, weight gain, cold intolerance, thinning or dull coat, hair loss, skin infections, slow heart rate, and changes in behaviour

Health Risks: cardiovascular problems, neurological issues, and a weakened immune system

Treatment: lifetime thyroid hormone replacement

Prevention: none





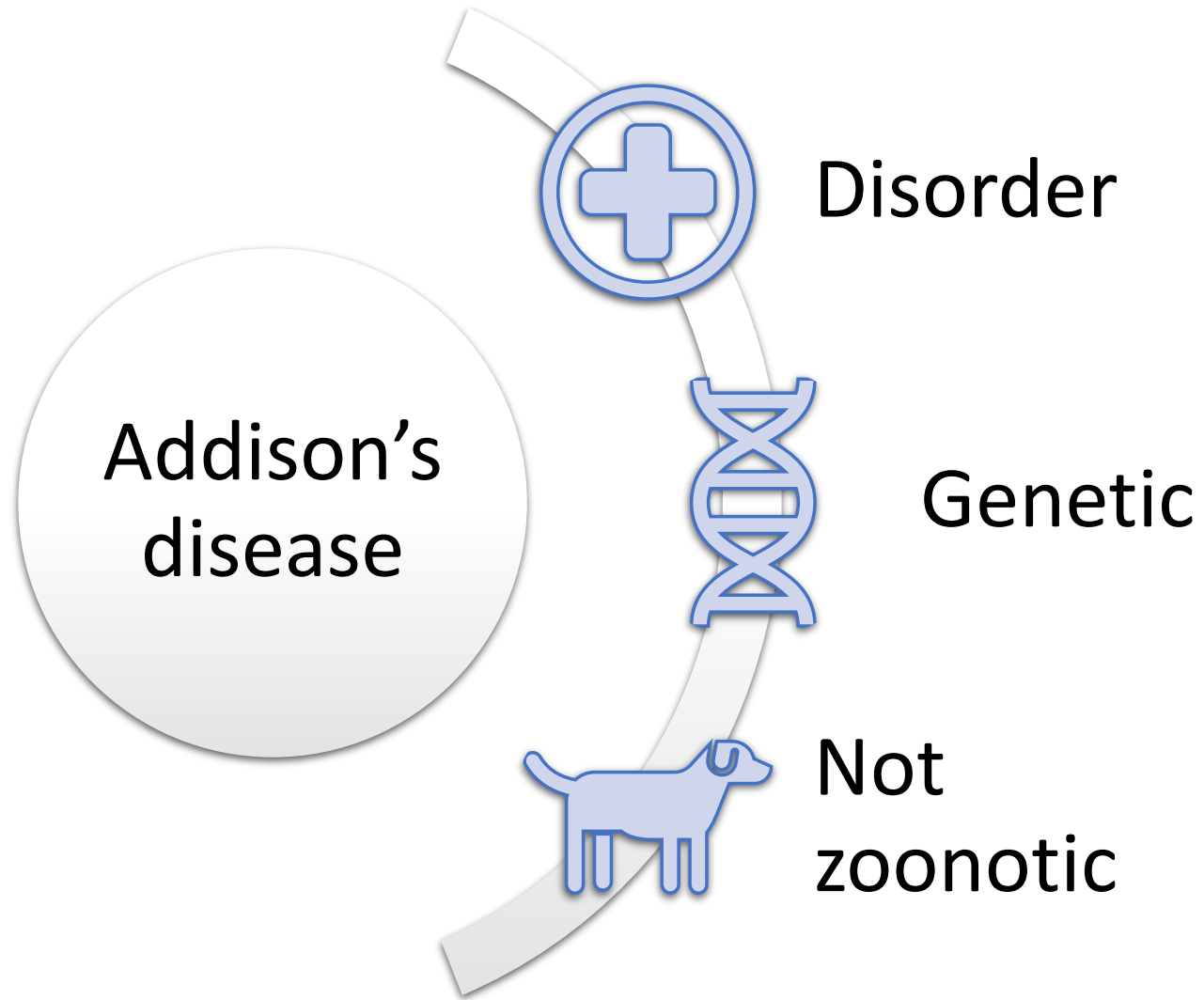
Symptoms: polydipsia, polyuria, polyphagia, panting, lethargy, muscle weakness, hair loss, and a pot-bellied appearance, skin issues

Health Risks: complications like high blood pressure, diabetes, kidney disease, and increased susceptibility to infections, blood clots, organ damage

Treatment: medication, surgery

Prevention: none





Symptoms: lethargy, vomiting, diarrhoea, weight loss, excessive thirst or urination, and a poor appetite, shock, low blood pressure

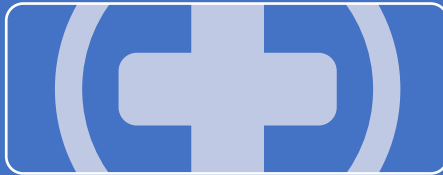
Health Risks: heatstroke, respiratory distress, and complications from exercise or stress. They may also be prone to dental crowding, skin fold infections, and eye injuries

Treatment: hormone replacement therapy, avoiding over exertion or stress

Prevention: none

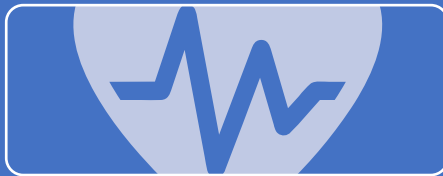


# Addisonian Crisis



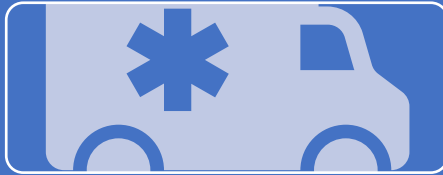
## Cause

- Insufficient hormones or electrolyte imbalances
- Stress or missed medication



## Signs and Symptoms

- Vomiting & diarrhoea, dehydration, low blood pressure
- Weakness & lethargy, collapse, shock



## Action to take

- Emergency vet treatment
- Administer fluids with electrolytes




## Prevention

- Ensure owner has administered medication
- Minimise stress



# Handling a dog with Addison's Disease

Know	Understand the condition
Calm	Minimise stress for the dog
Monitor	Monitor the dog's health and condition
Reduce	Work in short sessions
Communicate	Ask the owner about the vet's treatment plan
Hydrate	Offer water at regular intervals
Avoid	Avoid overheating
Post	Post-grooming care



Addison's disease is  
a disorder of which  
glands?

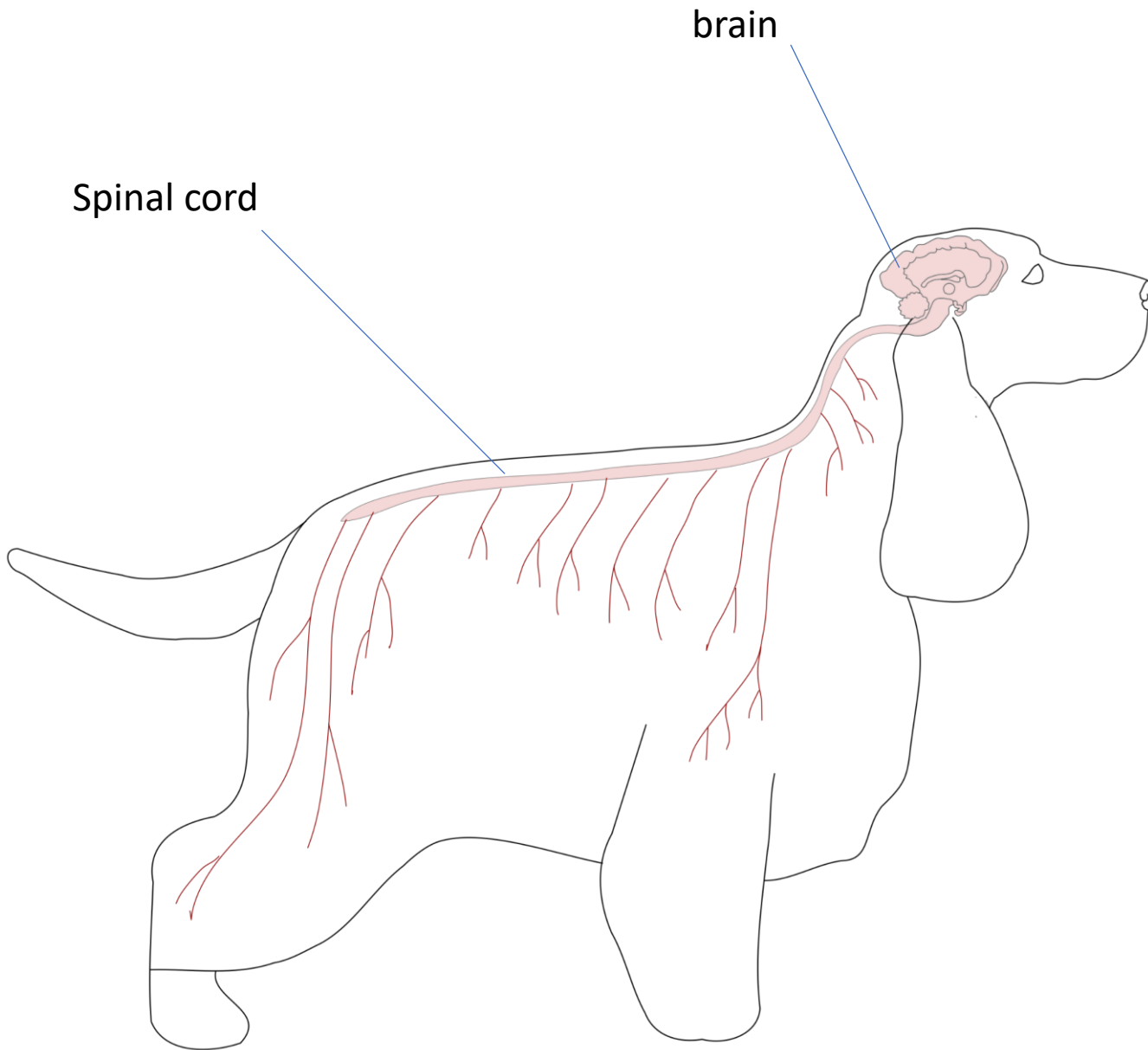




The answer is:

Adrenal glands

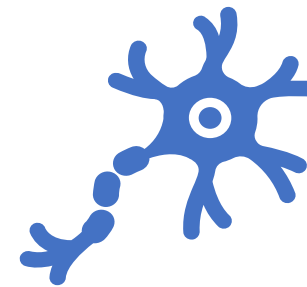




## Central Nervous System (CNS)

Brain

Spinal cord



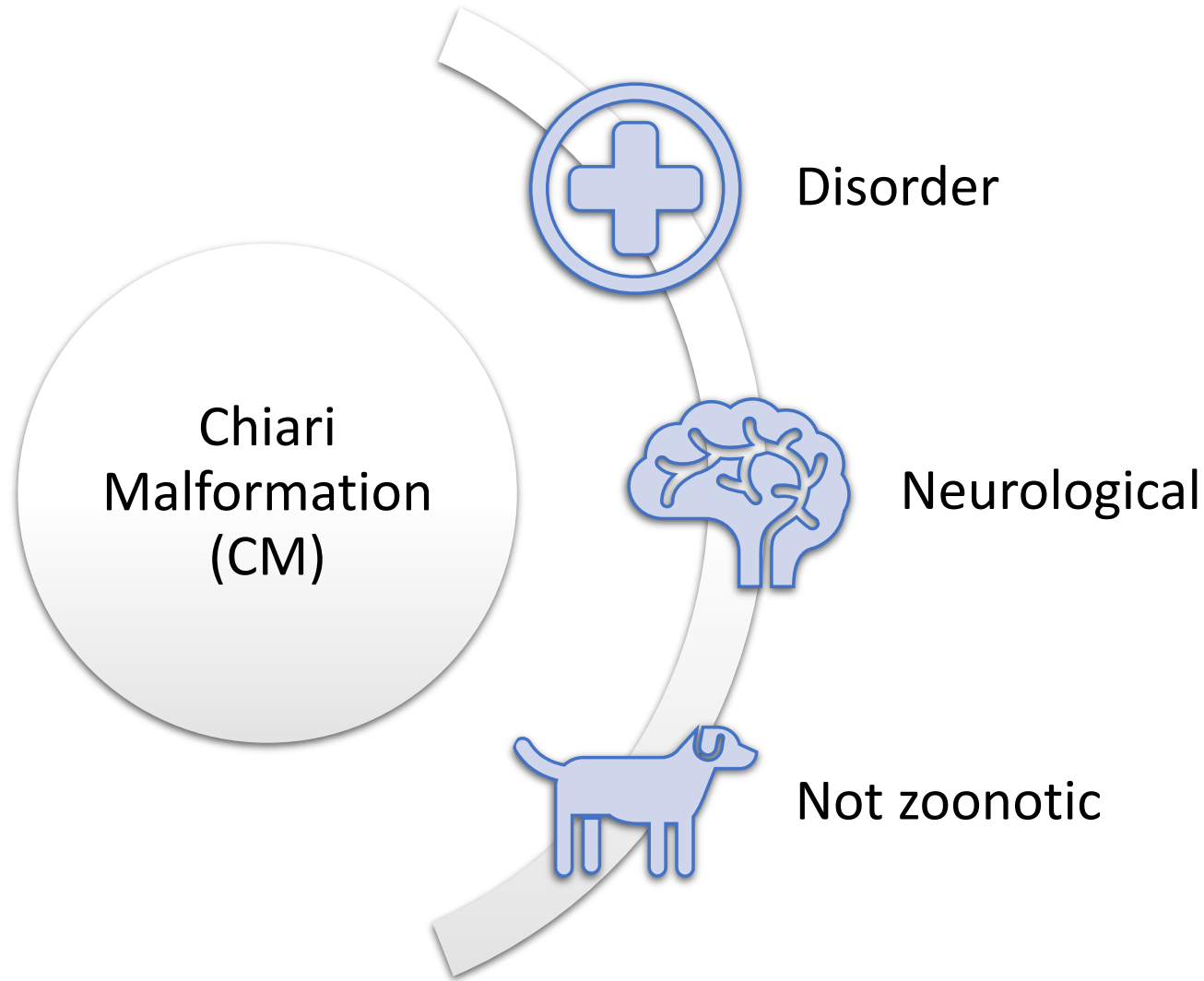
## Peripheral Nervous System (PNS)

Somatic nervous system

Autonomic nervous system

- Sympathetic nervous system
- Parasympathetic nervous system





Symptoms: phantom scratching, pain, sensitivity, ataxia, yelping/crying, head shaking, seizures

Health Risks: progressive neurological damage, chronic pain, death

Treatment: anti-inflammatory and pain medication, surgery, lifestyle adjustments

Prevention: screening for breeding programmes



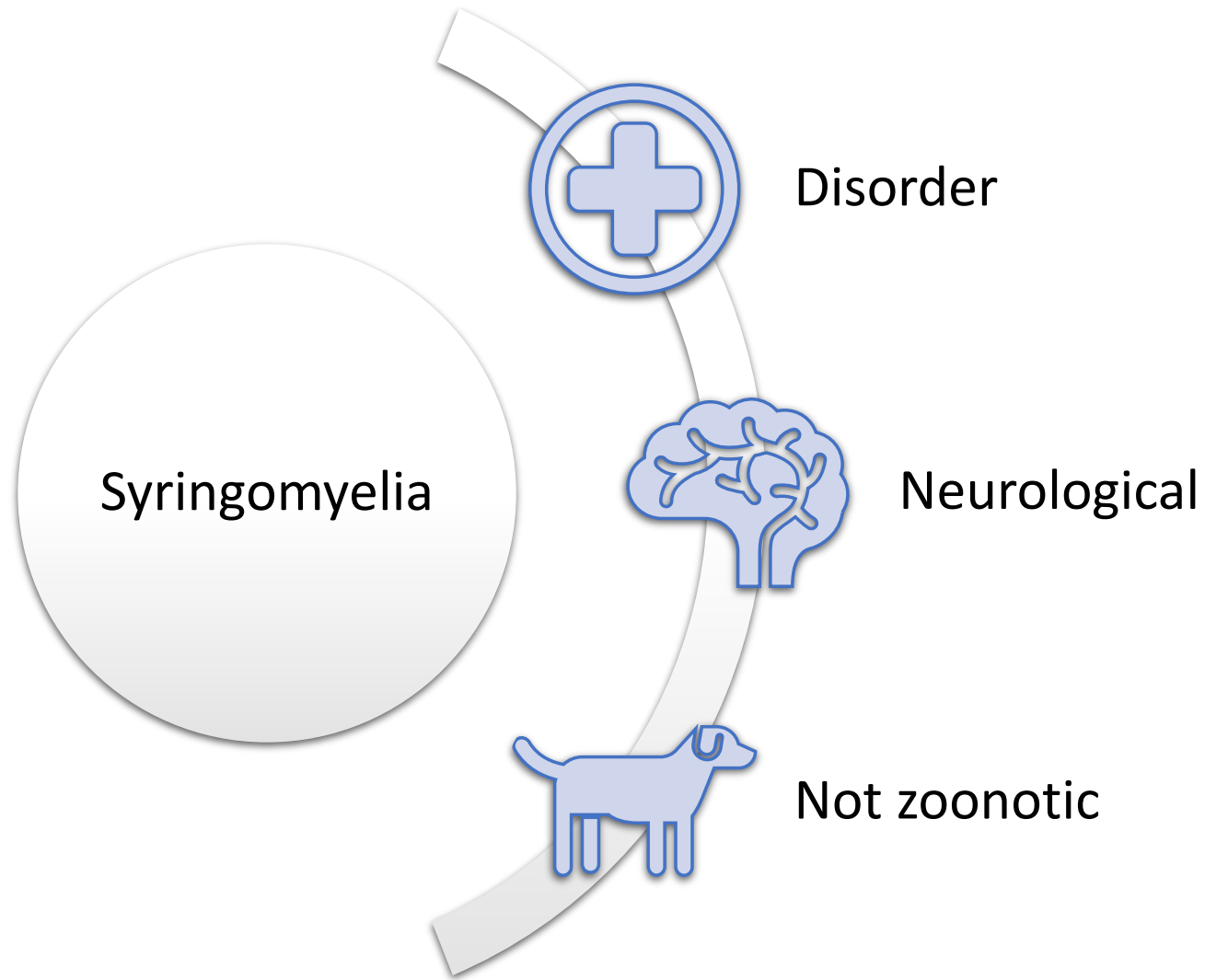
What is the main  
cause of Chiari  
Malformation?



The answer is:

Congenital skull  
malformation that results in  
the skull being too small to  
accommodate the brain





Symptoms: pain, weakness, difficulty walking, problems with coordination, scratching at the neck, head, or ears (due to pain), paralysis

Health Risks: progressive neurological damage, chronic pain, death

Treatment: anti-inflammatory and pain medication, surgery

Prevention: screening for breeding programmes



How should you adapt  
your restraints when  
grooming a dog with  
syringomyelia?

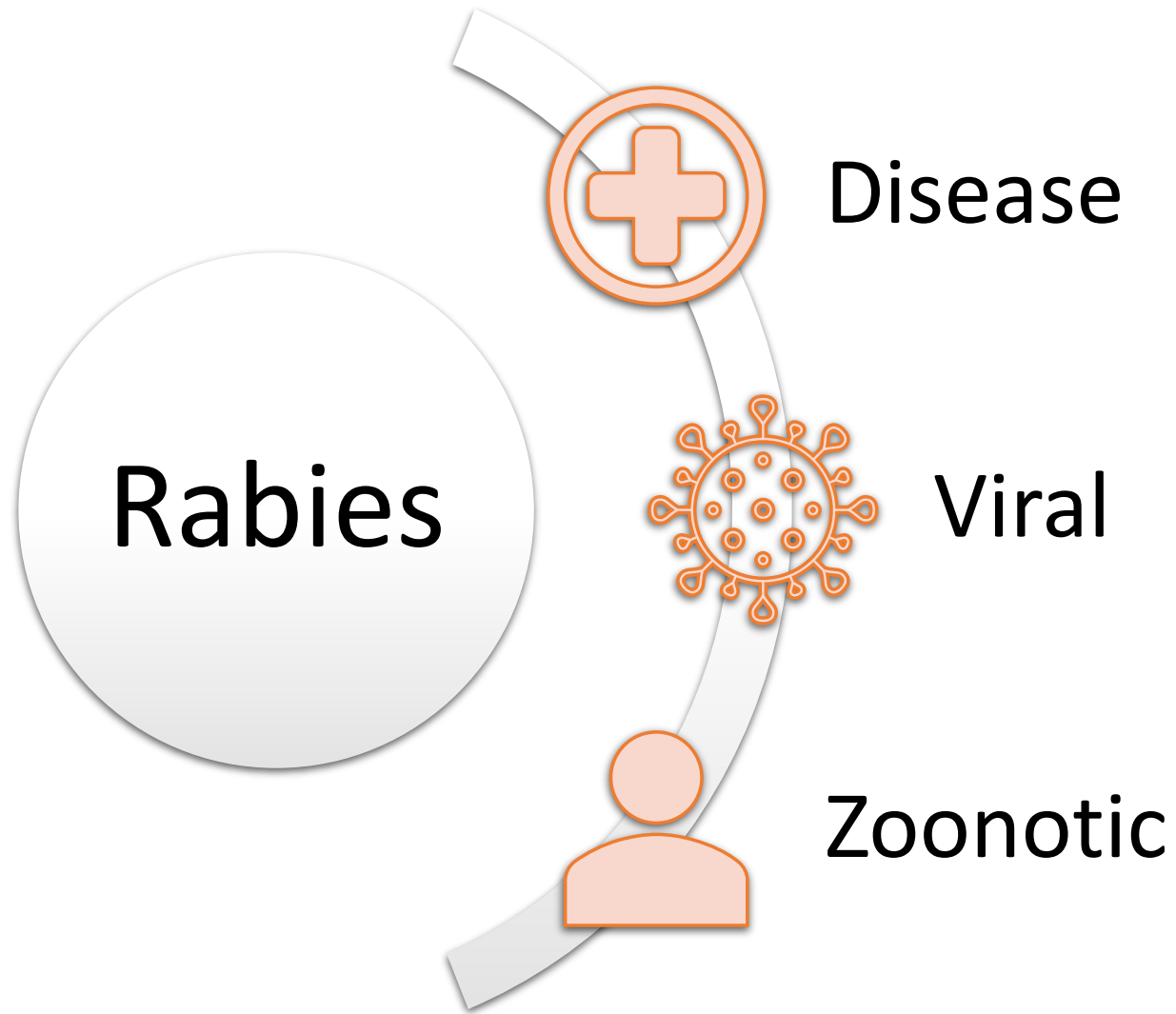


The answer is:

Use a harness rather than  
a noose and be extra  
gentle around the neck,  
head and spine.







Transmission: Bite of infected animal

Symptoms: behavioural changes, fever, lack of coordination, weakness, paralysis, and difficulty swallowing, seizures, paralysis, death

Health Risks: chronic joint problems, kidney damage (Lyme nephritis)

Treatment: NONE

Prevention: Vaccine

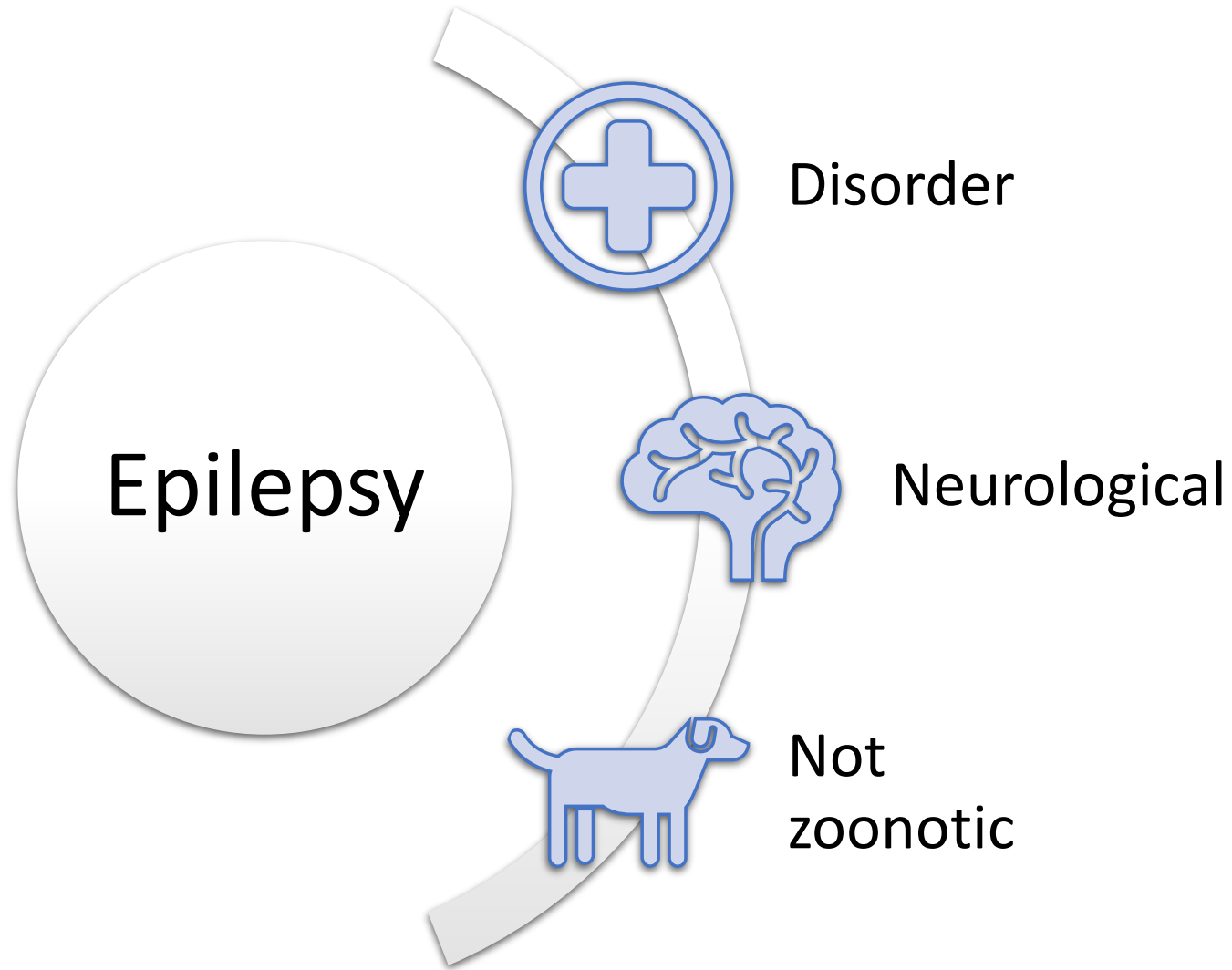


What part of the  
body does rabies  
attack?



The answer is:  
central nervous  
system





Symptoms: seizures, behavioural changes

Health Risks: long-term neurological damage, injury during a seizure, and a decrease in quality of life

Treatment: medication from a vet

Prevention: none



What are some of  
the early signs a  
seizure is imminent?



The answer is:

excessive drooling,  
disorientation, or  
twitching



# Luxating Patella



**Disorder**



**Genetic**



**Not zoonotic**

Symptoms: limping, skipping, or holding the leg up after walking or running

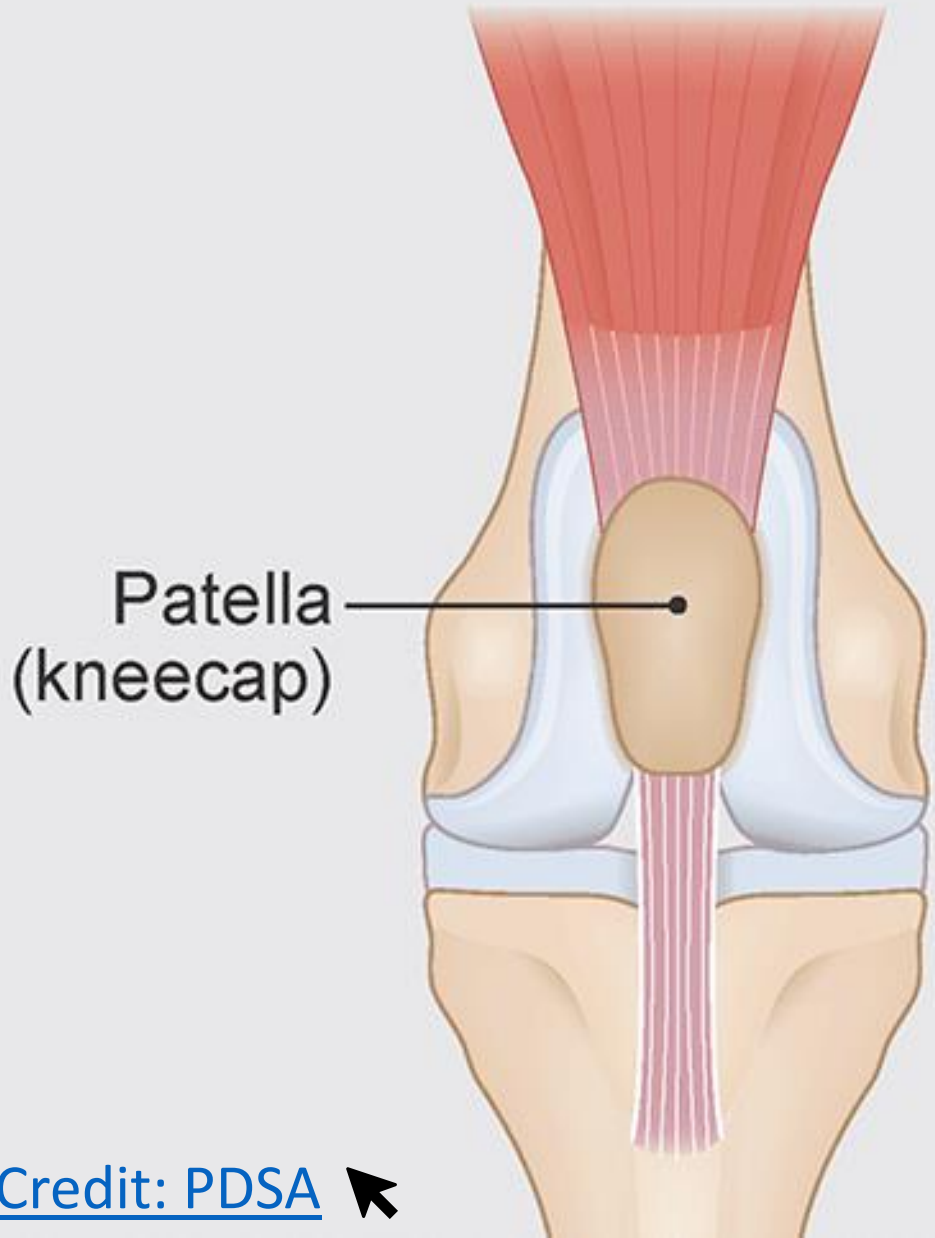
Health Risks: chronic pain, joint instability, and arthritis

Treatment: anti-inflammatory medications, weight management, and joint supplements to support overall joint health

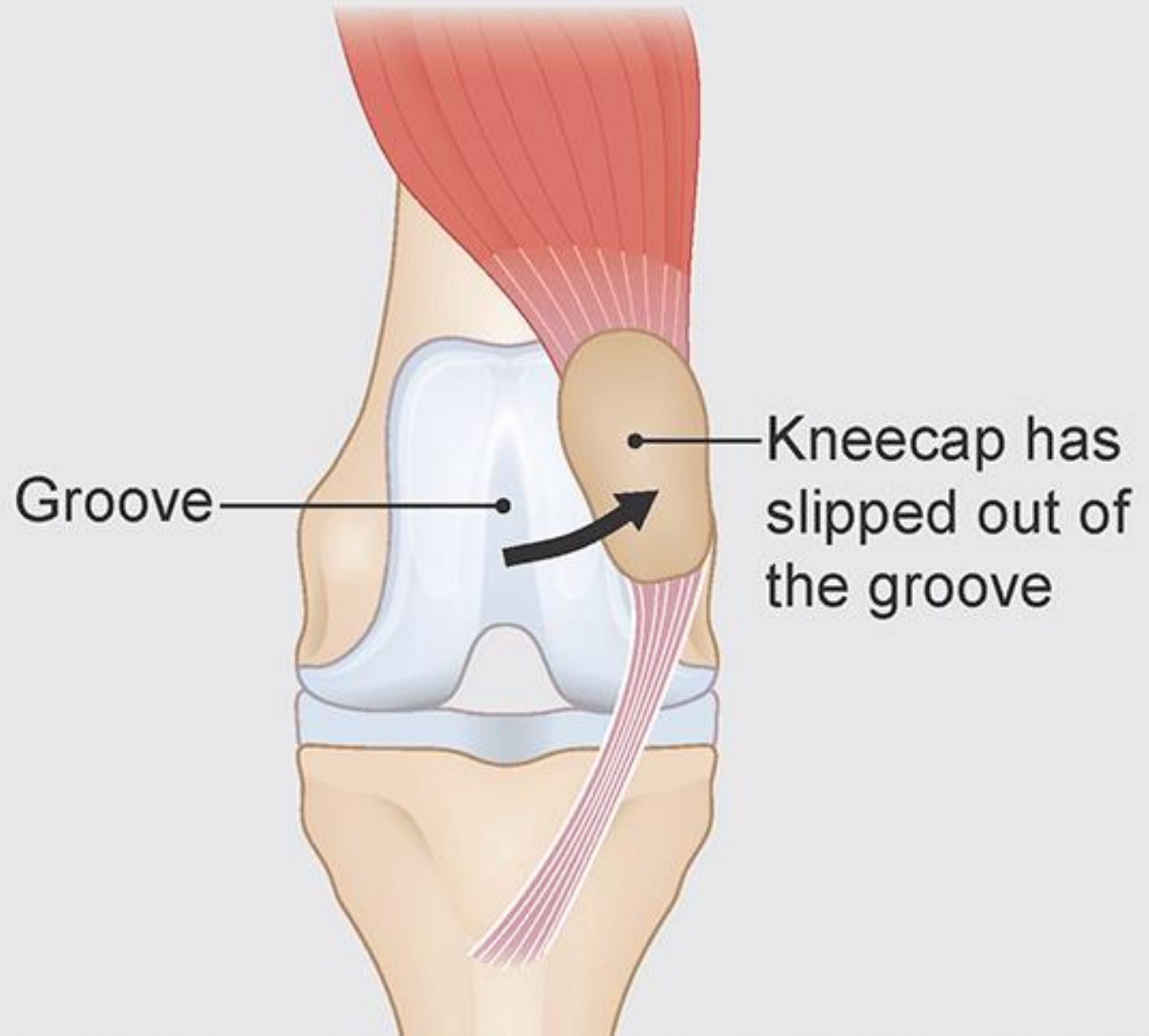
Prevention: selective/responsible breeding



# Healthy knee



# Luxated patella





How might you recognize signs of a luxating patella during a grooming session?



The answer is:

The dog may appear reluctant to have its hind legs handled or it may suddenly lift a leg while standing



# Hip Dysplasia



Disorder



Genetic



Not zoonotic

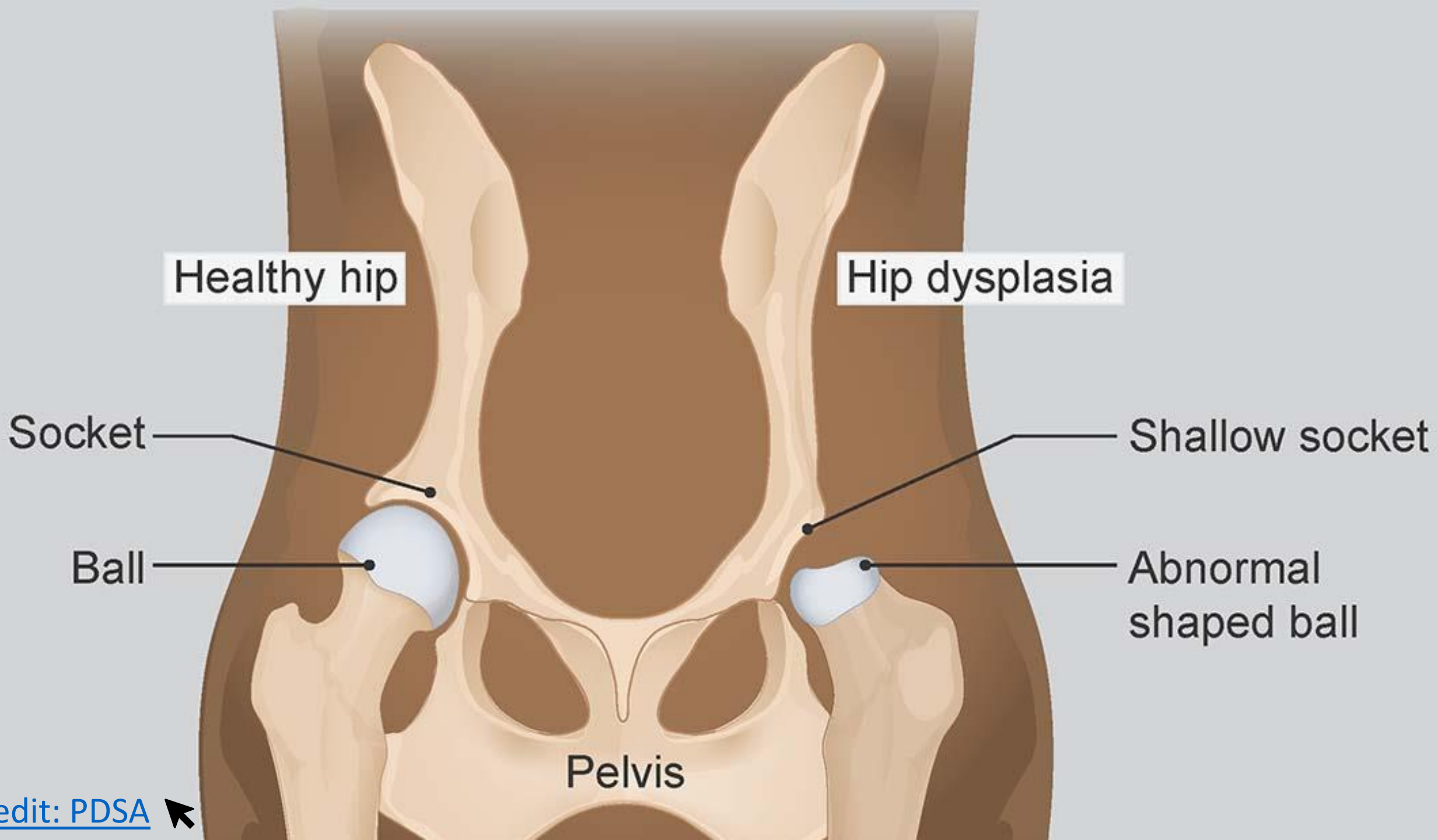
Symptoms: limping, difficulty standing up, stiffness after exercise, and a bunny-hopping gait

Health Risks: severe arthritis, chronic pain, and progressive disability

Treatment: weight management, joint supplements (like glucosamine), anti-inflammatory medications, and physical therapy to maintain joint mobility and reduce pain

Prevention: selective/responsible breeding





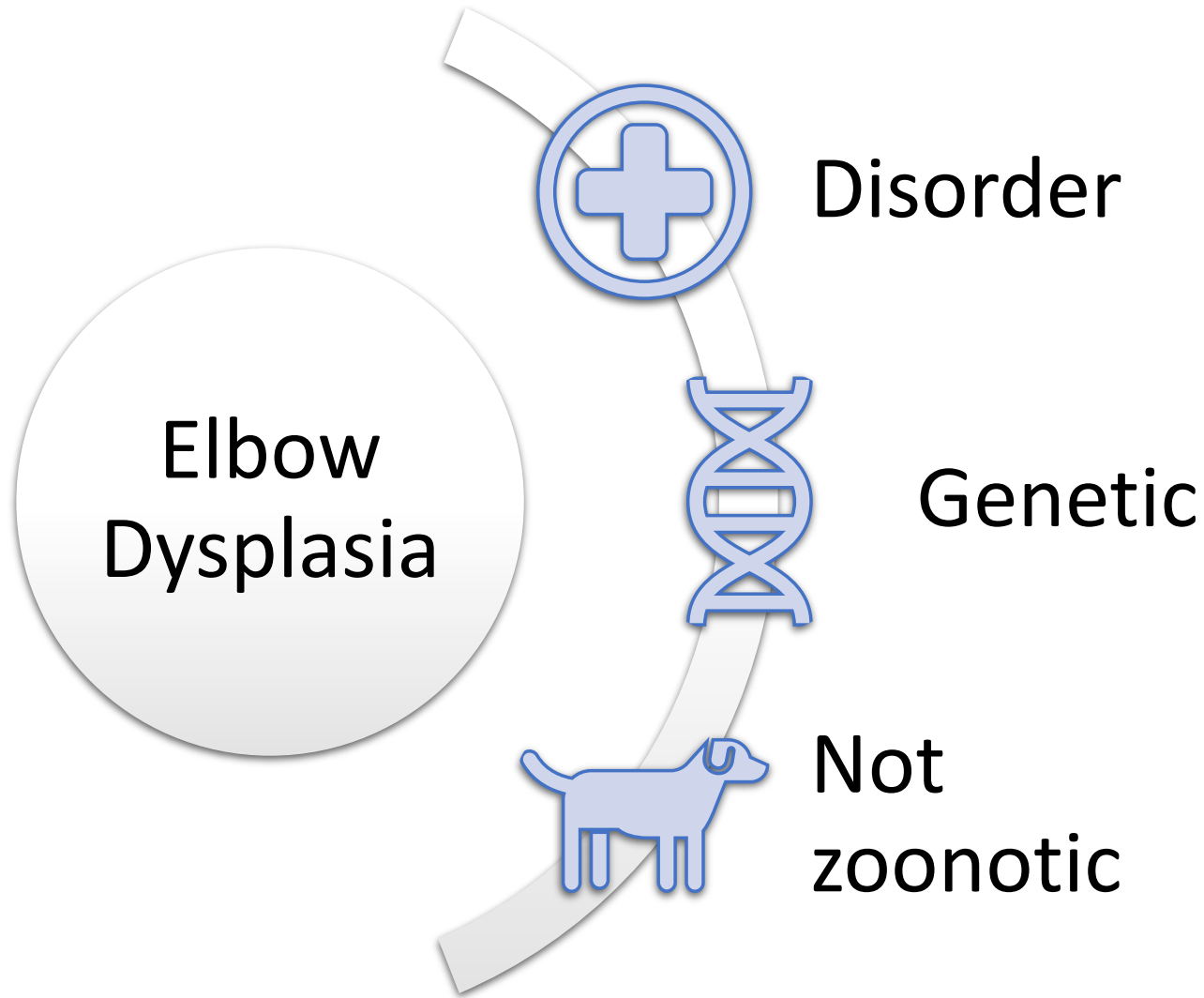
What causes hip  
dysplasia?



The answer is:

The main cause of hip dysplasia is genetic predisposition, and sometimes environmental factors can also play a role in the development of hip dysplasia, including rapid growth, obesity, and excessive exercise, especially in puppies of large or giant breeds. Poor nutrition during development can also contribute to the condition.





Symptoms: limping/lameness in one or both front legs, stiffness after exercise, reluctance to run, swelling, abnormal gait

Health Risks: severe arthritis, chronic pain, and progressive disability

Treatment: weight management, joint supplements (like glucosamine), anti-inflammatory medications, and physical therapy to maintain joint mobility and reduce pain, surgery

Prevention: selective/responsible breeding, weight management, supplements, appropriate exercise



Elbow dysplasia in dogs is caused by a bacterial infection and can be easily treated with antibiotics.

*True or False?*

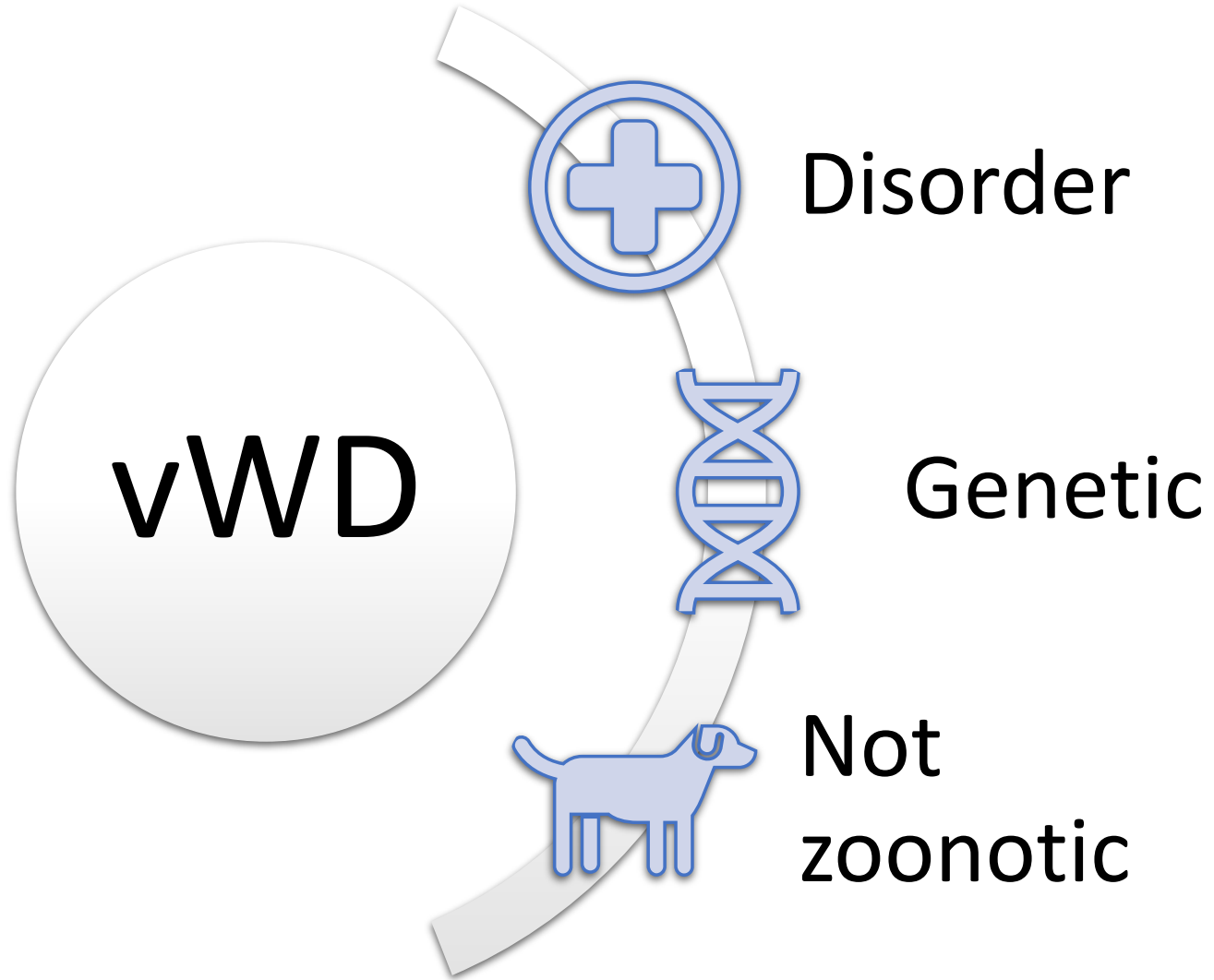




The answer is:

False





Symptoms: petechiae, excessive bleeding, bruising, nosebleeds, prolonged bleeding from cuts, difficulty healing from injuries, and excessive bleeding after surgery or during heat cycles

Health Risks: excessive bleeding, which can be life-threatening

Treatment: controlling bleeding, blood transfusion, desmopressin (a synthetic hormone), and medications that help promote clotting

Prevention: selective/responsible breeding



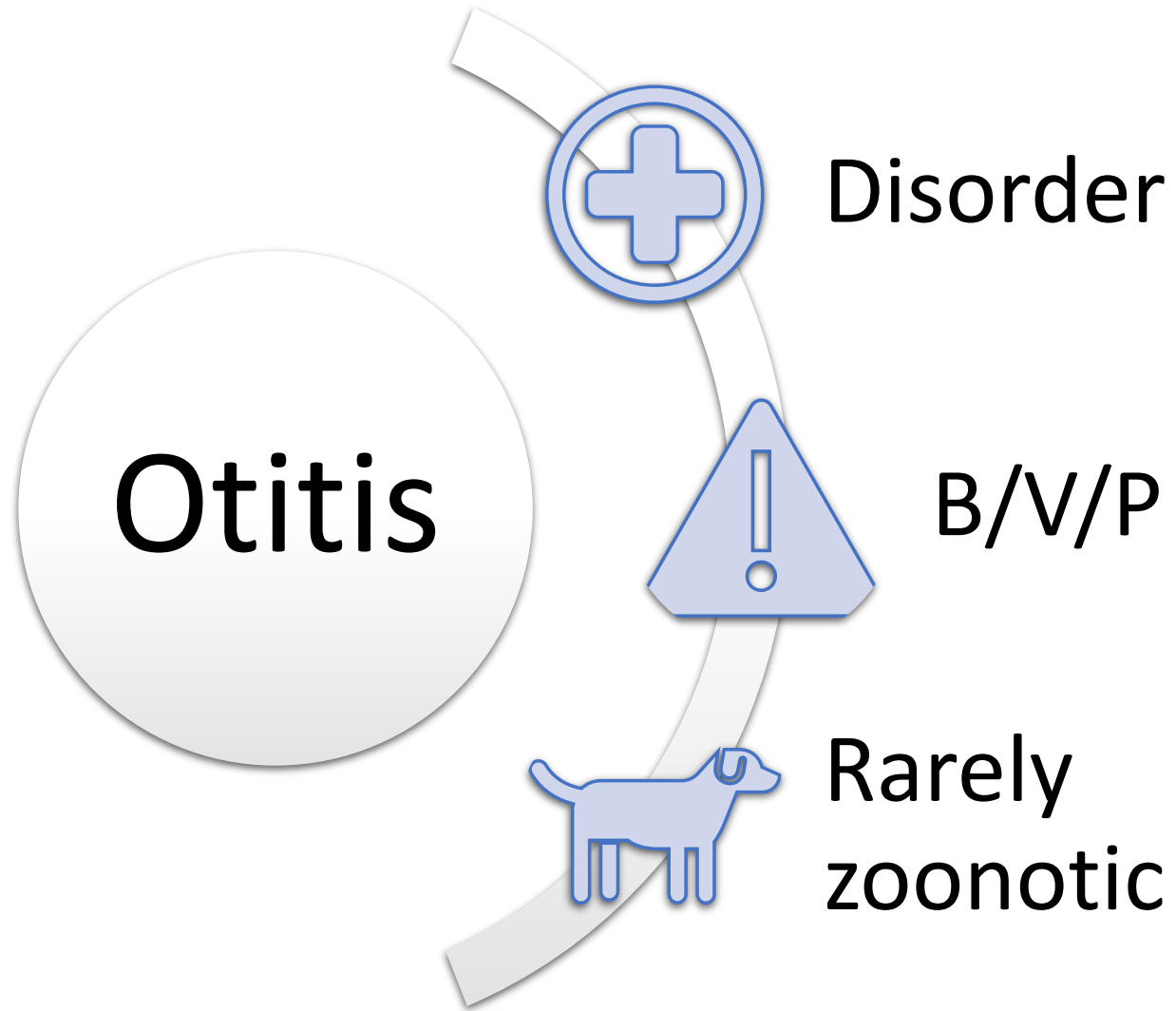
What is the health  
problem caused by  
von Willebrand's  
disease?



The answer is:

Excessive bleeding  
due to problems with  
blood coagulation






Symptoms: ear scratching, shaking the head, redness or swelling of the ear canal, discharge, foul odour , pain

Health Risks: chronic ear infections, pain, and permanent damage to the ear canal and eardrum

Treatment: antibiotics or antifungal ear drops, depending on the underlying cause of the infection

Prevention: clipping the hair around the external canal to aid air flow, regular ear checks and cleaning 

You should clean a dog's  
ears regularly to prevent  
otitis.

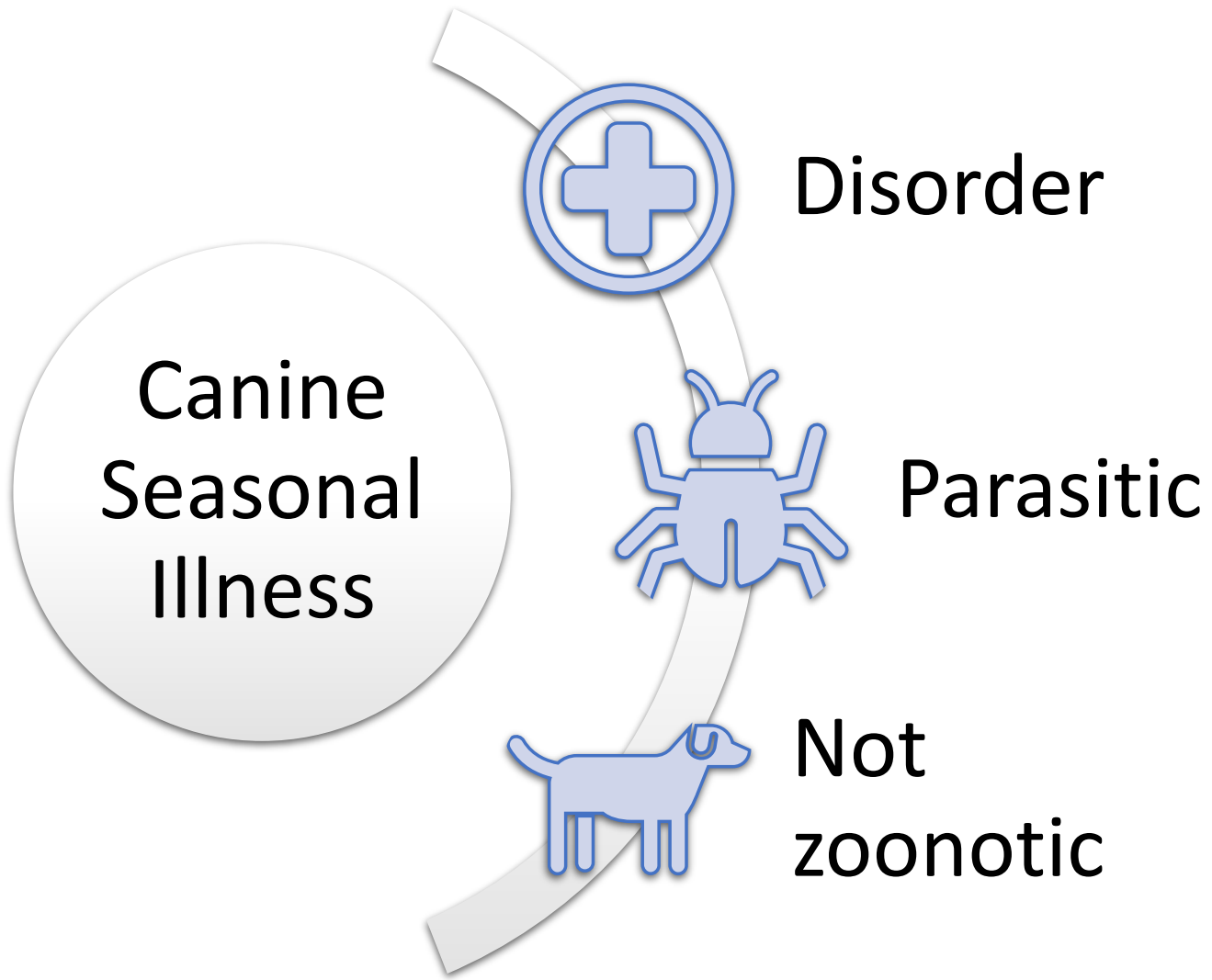
*True or False?*



The answer is:

False





Transmission: mites attach to the dog's skin when they walk through infested grass or woodland in autumn

Symptoms: severe itching, inflamed skin, scabs, alopecia

Health Risks: secondary bacterial infections, hot spots, skin damage, death

Treatment: prescribed spot on, antihistamines, steroids

Prevention: prescribed spot on







When are harvest mite  
larvae typically active?



The answer is:

Late summer and  
early autumn



Organise the conditions into the following categories. They may appear in more than one.

Which ones are vaccinated against?

Which ones are zoonotic?

Which ones you are most likely to come across as a dog groomer?

Which ones would require you to adapt the grooming procedure?

Which ones would require you to terminate the groom and refer to a vet as an emergency?

Which ones would require you to terminate the groom and refer to a vet for prompt treatment/diagnosis?





Please like and  
subscribe