Disinfecting the Home after Parvovirus

Without proper disinfection, parvovirus can stay alive in the environment for up to a year so you will want to ensure you properly clean your dog's food and water bowls, bed, toys and other things it may lick or put its mouth on.

Bleach has long been a standby product for inactivating canine parvovirus due to its availability and low cost. However, bleach is inactivated by organic material and therefore it is important to clean surfaces of any particles with a regular detergent before disinfecting it with bleach. Mix one part bleach to 30 parts water and allow the item to be in contact with this solution for I0-I5 minutes before thoroughly rinsing off with water. Dishes and toys can be soaked in the bleach solution. Beds, stuffed animals, blankets, and other items that can be laundered can be put through the washing machine using hot water and bleach.

Other cleaners have also been shown to be effective in killing parvovirus but are not as inexpensive or readily available to pet owners as bleach is. Wysiwash®, Bruclean®, Rescue®, and Trifectant® are just some of these products.

Outdoor areas should be thoroughly cleaned of all fecal matter and hosed down. Yards should then be allowed to dry out before another dog uses it. Sunlight and air drying do help limit the length of time the virus can survive. Products like Rescue® are highly recommended for porous surfaces such as scratched plastic, unsealed concrete, wood, or carpet and can be sprayed onto surfaces where the dog with parvovirus frequented.

If you are unable to clean an item with a cleaner known to kill parvovirus, such as those listed above, then you are better off disposing of it. This is especially true for items that are likely to have fecal residue on them.

For larger items like couches, rugs or carpets, steam cleaners are good options even if a parvovirus killing cleaner is not able to be used. Just make sure you clean everything as thoroughly as possible and allow it to dry before another dog uses it.