

### Avoid muddy walks

by Miles Dilworth

Dog owners have been warned not to walk their pets in muddy areas following the rise of a mysterious deadly disease. Alabama rot, which kills 80 per cent of affected animals, is set to claim a record number of a this year. The illness often goes undetected until it is too late as initial b appear simply as cuts and sores on a pet's legs.



Little is known about the disease and its rise has baffled c, who have not yet found an effective treatment for it. Cases have increased since it arrived in the UK in 2012, when there were six cases. This grew to 19 in 2016 and 40 in 2017. This year there have been 29 cases already.

Infections seem to occur in muddy areas, although this is yet to be proven, so d should wash their dogs if they walk in mud. The Dogs Trust advises the following: 'Where possible, stick to dry paths and keep your dog out of muddy or wet areas... check their legs for any lesions or wounds.'

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