

DBC News

September 2011

Dachshund Breed Council



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Lafora Disease

On 22/09/11 we met with the researchers from Centogene for an update on their testing of the initial batch of swab samples submitted in August. Dr. Cathryn Mellersh, Prof. Jeff Sampson and Bill Lambert joined us in order to understand the testing protocols with a view to us getting KC endorsement of the Lafora Test.

An initial batch of 31 samples has been tested by Centogene and they have a further 60 to process through their laboratory. The 31 samples are now subject to a Quality Control process before the final results can be released. This delay will clearly be disappointing for those owners who have submitted swabs, but we hope you appreciate that the rigour being applied by Centogene is designed to ensure we all can have confidence in the test results. This Lafora screening programme is intended to run for 2 years and is likely to involve 500 samples, so it is essential we start correctly.

The potential "advantage" of this delay is that Centogene will also be able to process more of the other swab samples and therefore give us a more statistically representative set of data when they do report the results.

Please bear with us and we will issue more news as soon as we can.

Mini Wire owners have booked approx. £10,000 of tests in the first two months of us offering this test which is a fantastic sign of their commitment to health improvement.

There is a Lafora Support Group and their [website](#) has lots of useful information on the disease and how it can be managed in affected dogs.

Please contact Nora Price for further details of testing arrangements.

(e-mail: laforatesting@mypostoffice.co.uk)

Please note that Nora has advised that she will not be able to check her e-mails between 1st and 16th November. Any urgent enquiries in that period can be directed to ian@sunsong.co.uk

Day Blindness in WHD: AHT Research Screening Results

Following our request to the AHT to carry out a research screening programme for a form of PRA in Wirehaired Dachshunds, we have now received their report and analysis...

In 2008, researchers in Norway, Sweden and the USA identified the mutation responsible for an early-onset form of cone-rod dystrophy (CRD) in Standard Wire-Haired Dachshunds (SWHDs). This mutation occurs in a gene known as nephroretinin (NPHP4) and is responsible for a "day blindness"

form of progressive retinal atrophy (PRA). Geneticists working in the Kennel Club Genetics Centre (KCGC) at the Animal Health Trust (AHT) subsequently found that this mutation is also present at a low frequency in the UK population of Miniature Wire-Haired Dachshunds. The AHT has since made a DNA test available to both wire-haired varieties.

To investigate these findings further, the KCGC was asked by the Wire-Haired Dachshund Club to determine the frequency of the NPHP4 mutation in UK SWHDs. To this end DNA was collected from a set of 39 SWHDs (20 dogs, 19 bitches) all of whom were registered with the UK Kennel Club. All 39 dogs, who ranged in age from 6 months to 13 years and who each had a unique sire and dam within the sample cohort, were DNA tested for the NPHP4 mutation.

Of the 39 dogs screened for the mutation, a single dog was found to be a carrier (one copy of the mutant allele) and the remaining 38 dogs tested clear (no copies of the mutant allele). Since each dog possesses two copies of the NPHP4 gene, the frequency of the mutation can be calculated as one in 78, which is equal to 0.013 (1.3 %).

Assuming that the dogs that were sampled represent a random subset of the UK population and that mating between dogs occurs randomly with respect to this mutation, the Hardy-Weinberg equilibrium equation can be applied. If p represents the normal allele and q represents the mutant allele, the equation $p^2 + 2pq + q^2 = 1$ is used to calculate the percentage of clear, carrier and affected dogs in the population. Using this approximation, we therefore estimate that 97.4% of SWHDs in the UK are clear of the mutation, 2.57% are carriers and 0.017% are affected.

We are grateful to Christine Gibson of the WHDC for coordinating this programme.

The full list of dogs tested, their screening results and details of their sires and dams will be published by the WHDC.

Recommendations:

We have discussed these results with Dr. Cathryn Mellersh at the AHT in order to make recommendations to owners of SWHDs. The frequency of this mutation in the breed is very low, but it is known to be associated with dogs of Scandinavian breeding.

It is therefore recommended that anyone whose dogs have Scandinavian ancestors, or anyone planning such a mating, SHOULD make use of this NPHP4 DNA test. Any Carrier or Affected dogs should only be mated to Clear dogs.

On the basis of this research, there is no evidence that dogs of pure US or UK breeding carry this mutation. We also have no evidence from clinical eye tests that early-onset PRA is a problem in SWHDs, but it is a number of years since eye testing was carried out at WHDC shows.

An ophthalmologist from the AHT recently said: "clinical eye testing and genetic testing work so well together; you need both".

It is also worth reminding Mini Wire Dachshund owners that this mutation was found in 3% of the MWHHDs screened by the AHT in 2010.

Back Disease Research

We asked for 50 DNA swabs from Dachshunds over the age of 12 that had not suffered any form of back problems, to act as "control" samples in our IVDD research programme. Within 2 weeks we had achieved our target and now have submitted those samples to the Animal Health Trust. More than 30 additional samples have been offered by owners of elderley Dachshunds with no history of Back

Disease, so we'd like to express our thanks for all these offers.

Lesley McNaughton is coordinating this programme and sample collection is now CLOSED.

As soon as the AHT advises us on the number and type of samples needed from "Affected" Dachshunds, we will publish details.

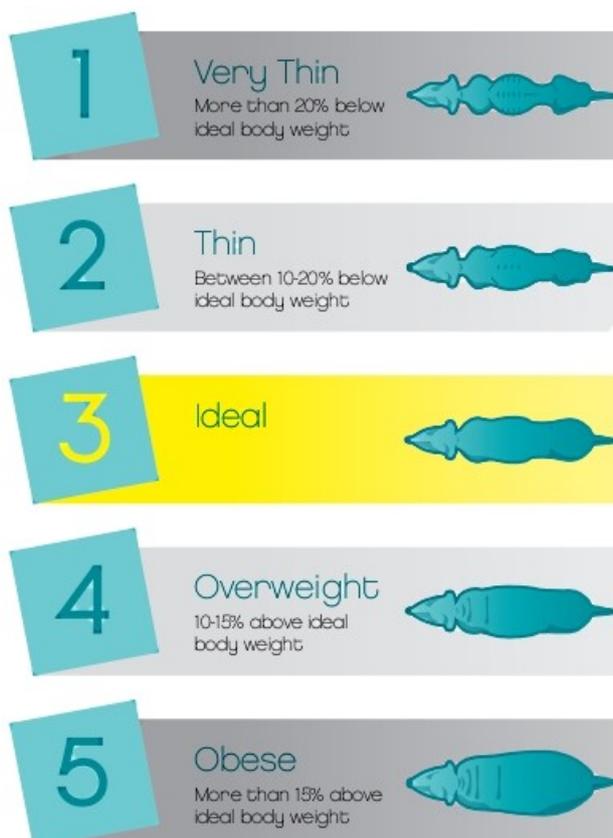
Don't forget, you can order the DodgersList DVD on back disease from us for only £4.50. [Download an Order Form](#).

Welfare information

The Breed Council's [Health website](#) now has a [page on "welfare matters"](#) with links to information on eight topics:

- Your Dachshund's bodyweight (too fat or too thin?)
- Exercise
- Dogs in cars on hot days
- Judges and their responsibilities for health and welfare when judging
- Should I breed from my Dachshund bitch?
- Should I use my Dachshund dog at stud?
- Should I spay or neuter my Dachshund?
- What to do if you've bought an ill Dachshund from a classified advert or website

We all know how much Dachshunds love their food, but there are also a few of "life's thin ones", so the information on bodyweight includes the following visual guide, which was developed as a [Pet-Size-O-meter](#).



Complaints and Objections

From time to time we get letters, e-mails and 'phone calls to the Breed Council from people who feel aggrieved about something that has happened at a show, or about the behaviour/actions of a breeder.

We would like to remind you that any complaints about incidents at a show should be reported to the **Society Secretary** and not the Breed Council. Complaints, on the day, that relate to a breach of KC Regulations must be made in writing to the Show Society's Secretary, with the objection fee. Witnesses' details should also be provided and their written statements taken. The Secretary will then forward all this information to the KC. The regulations also allow for objections to be made directly to the KC within seven days of the show.

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E-mail: secretary@dachshundbreedcouncil.org.uk

Website: <http://www.dachshundbreedcouncil.org.uk>

Health Reporting Website: <http://www.uk-dachshund-health-report.org.uk>

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