

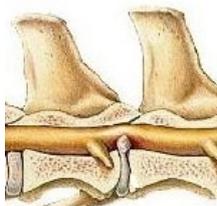
Dachshund Breed Council Newsletter



This month...

Back Disease Project – Lafora Screening – Can you help the DAC? - Popular Sires – Dachs-Life 2012

Back Disease (IVDD) Research Project – update



Back Disease

Thank you to everyone who has offered to provide “control” DNA swab samples for our Back Disease Research programme. We should now have enough samples to provide a good cross-section of dogs from the six varieties.

The AHT is now also collecting samples from dogs undergoing back surgery in their own clinic and also at Dr. Clare Rusbridge's clinic.

We have also been approached by a veterinary organisation specialising in Thermal Imaging technology. This is widely used in equine veterinary practice to identify sources of pain and inflammation. We are considering the possibility of carrying out a research screening exercise of a group of Dachshunds to see if any thermal differences can be detected in their spines. This is still very much at the exploratory discussion stage and we will provide further information if we decide to go ahead.

Our Health website includes a [list of UK back specialists](#) and we have been updating this over the past couple of months. If you can recommend a Referral Practice, Physiotherapist, Hydrotherapist or other back specialist, please [e-mail us](#) their contact details, preferably with a link to their website. (e-mail: ivdd@dachshundhealth.org.uk)

Finally, this month we have reviewed a paper published in the Journal of the American Veterinary Association which describes an analysis of the incidence of intervertebral disc degeneration–related diseases and associated mortality rates in dogs. This is based on over half a million Swedish dog insurance records (of all breeds).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, it identifies Miniature and Standard Dachshunds as being at the highest risk of back disease of all breeds. According to the paper, of dogs that lived up to 12 years of age, 20% of Miniature Dachshunds and 15% of Standard Dachshunds were at risk for at least one occurrence of IVD degeneration–related disease. By comparison, the proportion of dogs less than 12 years old with this same risk in the entire population was 3.5%.

There is a summary of the paper on our [Health website here](#) as well as a link to the original paper.

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If you have been sent a copy of this, but aren't on our mailing list, please click the image link below.



Lafora Disease Screening Programme - update



Lafora Disease

The WHDC Lafora Sub-group will be presenting an update of their work at the Breed council meeting on 21st October.

In order to summarise the current situation, an updated list of "Frequently Asked Questions" (FAQs) has been prepared. This is available on our [Health website here](#).

The questions include:

- ⤴ When will the full DNA test be available from Canada?
- ⤴ I have a Mini Wire that I want to breed from; what should I do?
- ⤴ I can't afford the cost of a DNA test; what should I do?
- ⤴ What does a "Not Affected" test result mean?

Obviously, the key question everyone wants an answer to is when will the Canadian test be available. Sue Holt has been in regular contact with the lab who are working to streamline the testing process. As soon as we know, we will let people know. We are completely in the hands of the research lab and they are working to perfect a reliable method of identifying Clear, Carrier and Affected dogs using saliva and/or blood samples. The test is complicated and developing an approach that will be viable for large numbers of samples is proving difficult.

Anyone who needs additional specific information should contact one of the Lafora Team: [Sue Holt](#) or [Nora Price](#).

The [FAQ document](#) also includes a pictorial guide to the genetics of Lafora Disease to help breeders make the most responsible decision, with the available information, and to avoid producing further Lafora Affected puppies. Remember, up to 1 in 10 Mini Wire puppies are currently at risk of Lafora Disease. That proportion can be reduced by making use of the available information on current dogs' Lafora status.

Can you and your vet help the Dog Advisory Council?



Chris Laurence, a member of the Advisory Council on the Welfare Issues of Dog Breeding, has asked for the Breed Council's help with a pilot project the Council is conducting with veterinary surgeons and breeders...

I guess most breeders will at some time have been faced with the purchaser of a puppy claiming that there is something wrong with it that the breeder should have told them about. Often the complaint is completely unjustified but inevitably causes a huge amount of heartache to the responsible breeder.

One solution to this is to have the puppies checked by your vet before they go to their new homes, but vets have always been somewhat reluctant to sign health certificates for fear of being sued later by the puppy's new owner. The Advisory Council on the Welfare Issues of Dog Breeding is well aware of the problem and has had long discussions with the veterinary profession's governing and representative bodies (the RCVS, BVA and BSAVA) and the Veterinary Defence Society who provide the profession's indemnity insurance.

The result of the discussions is a Puppy Health Check Form which everyone is happy for the vet to sign. However, before we launch the form to the big wide

world we want to pilot it with a number of litters being checked by vets so that we know it is as easy to use as we think it is.

We can only do that if we can find breeders who are willing to help us with the pilot. All we need you to do is to take a litter to your vet for a check before the puppies go to their new homes. We will provide you with the forms and a letter for your vet to explain the pilot scheme. There will be a pre-paid envelope for your vet to return the forms and a feedback form to us.

If you would like to help us in this important pilot scheme please either e-mail Chris Laurence who is running the pilot on chrisandsheila.laurence@virgin.net or ring him on 07503 999289 at any time. The pilot pack will be in the post by return. We look forward to hearing from you.

Popular Sires – what does that mean?

The popular sire effect results from the over use of a particular stud dog and/or his progeny and is thought to produce a reduction in genetic diversity by effectively excluding other males from the gene pool.

The popular sire effect is not necessarily confined to the numerically smaller breeds. This phenomenon has the potential to cause a diminution in the variety of available genes within a breed and increase the risk of introducing and disseminating defective genes.

An article explaining the Popular Sire effect and why it is important for all breeders to be aware of it was recently published in the Kennel Gazette. We have obtained permission to reproduce the article on our [Health website](#).

The article concludes by saying...

Owners of stud dogs should carefully consider the desirability, whenever possible, of ensuring that potential sires are carefully screened for any known genetic defects prior to being used at stud. The responsible stud dog owner will not permit widespread use of a young male until there has been adequate opportunity to study the offspring that are produced during his initial period at stud.

You can [read the full article here](#), courtesy of the Kennel Club. You might also like to visit our [Genetics and Diversity page](#) and look at our summary of [Dachshund Sires](#).

Dachs-Life 2012 – pet vs. show owner results

The inclusion of a high number of pet-owner reports in Dachs-Life 2012 has been a really useful addition to the overall picture we have obtained on the health of Dachshunds in the UK. You can read the [full report here](#), or download a [pdf copy here](#).

Overall, pet owners reported 0.82 conditions per dog compared with 0.58 reported by show owners. In many cases there are no significant differences, but the main differences were as follows:

- ⤴ Pet-owners were nearly four times as likely to neuter male dogs as show owners, but only twice as likely to spay their bitches
- ⤴ Pet-owners were half as likely to breed from their Dachshund as show owners
- ⤴ Pet owners were more likely to have their dogs vaccinated annually
- ⤴ Show owners were more likely to report Mammary Tumours in their bitches and the majority of those were bitches that had been bred from
- ⤴ There was no difference in the incidence of heart conditions between pet

and show-owned Dachshunds

- ⤴ Pet owners were twice as likely to report cases of Cushings Disease and three times more likely to report Diabetes than show owners
- ⤴ Pet owners were twice as likely to report allergy-related problems
- ⤴ Pet-owned Dachshunds had twice as many back disease problems reported as show-owned Dachshunds
- ⤴ Pet owners were five times more likely to report Epilepsy than show owners
- ⤴ Show-owned bitches were twice as likely to have False Pregnancies reported than pet-owned bitches
- ⤴ Pet-owned male Dachshunds were twice as likely to be Monorchids
- ⤴ Pet owners were more likely than show owners to say that their Dachshund had some degree of behavioural or temperament problem

For those people breeding Dachshunds and selling them to pet homes, it is important to ensure potential buyers are fully aware of the health issues that can affect the breed and on how to rear them and keep them fit, healthy and mentally stimulated. It is also important that pet buyers understand that some Dachshunds can be difficult to house-train and that, temperamentally, they are probably not going to be as easy to train as a gundog.

The Breed Council has published several introductory guides which can be downloaded from our website, giving advice to current and potential Dachshund owners.

- ⤴ [Buying a Dachshund](#)
- ⤴ [Owning a Dachshund](#)

And, finally...



[My Dog: the paradox](#) is a really amusing cartoon that all of us Dachshund owners will be able to relate to.

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