



An introduction to our Breed Health Plan

What is a Breed Health Plan?

A Breed Health Plan summarises all the available data and information we have on the breed today and sets out what we need to do to ensure a healthy future.

Our Health Plan is based on a model developed by the Kennel Club in its guide for Breed Health Coordinators.

Why do we need a Health Plan?

Pedigree dogs and their breeders are under scrutiny like never before. There are accusations that pedigree dogs are inherently unhealthy and that breeding practices only serve to make the situation worse.

A Breed Health Plan enables us to present the facts about Dachshunds and their health. It is also a way to explain to breeders what they can do to safeguard the health of their dogs and the breed as a whole.

What do we mean by “healthy”?

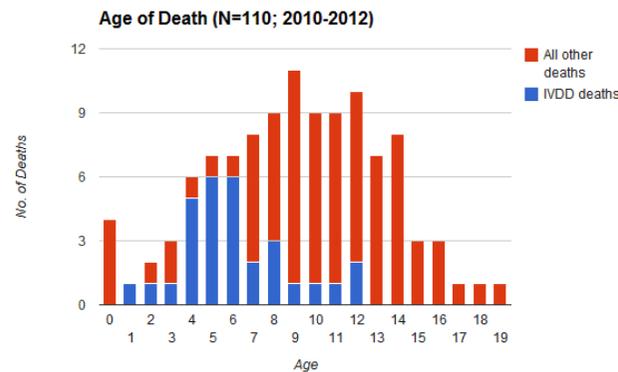
The majority of people who own Dachshunds want them to be long-lived, fit and good-natured companions. So, our Health Plan has to consider health from a number of perspectives:

- How long do they live?
- What health problems do they suffer from?
- Are their temperaments bold and outgoing?

It also has to consider the genetic diversity of the breed as a whole because it is well-known that inbreeding in small populations invariably leads to health problems.

Ensuring Dachshund health

All our health survey evidence tells us that the average Dachshund will live to around 11 or 12 years of age.



Everyone knows that Intervertebral Disc Disease (IVDD – Back Disease) is the most significant health issue facing Dachshunds. Deaths due to

IVDD (the blue bars in the chart) account for a quarter of all the deaths reported to the Breed Council. The good news is that not all six varieties of Dachshund are equally prone to back problems. Reducing the prevalence of IVDD is one of our Health Plan's objectives.

Our Dachs-Life 2012 Health Survey highlighted other conditions that we need to be aware of to ensure they do not become major problems:

- Lafora Disease in Mini Wires
- Epilepsy in Mini Longs
- Cardiac Disease in Wires

We already have DNA screening tests for Lafora Disease and cord1 PRA and our Health Plan explains why it is important to use these tests. However, we need to use these tests to reduce the frequency of the mutations without adversely affecting genetic diversity. We should also use clinical screening tests (e.g. for eye disease) where these are available.

Excessive use of a small number of stud dogs (the so-called Popular Sire effect) can also adversely affect the breed's genetic diversity. This is more likely to happen in the Standard varieties where registration levels are lower than in the Minis. Our Health Plan recommends that no one stud dog should sire more than 20 litters over his lifetime. Our Health Plan recommends breeders use the KC's Mate Select program to inform breeding decisions by aiming for lower Coefficients of Inbreeding.

[Download the full Health Plan.](#)