

Update on Early Onset Renal Disease Study Group

The Early Onset Renal Disease Study Group is pleased to announce that DCA and DCAF have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the American Kennel Club Canine Health Foundation (AKC CHF) to begin the process of identifying, selecting and initiating research with the purpose of identifying the gene for Early Onset Renal Disease (Juvenile Renal Disease).

What happens next?

The process is very deliberate and requires three major steps:

1. Request for Proposal (RFP): CHF will create and distribute to the research community a Request for Proposal that addresses Early Onset Renal Disease in Dalmatians.
2. Review of Proposals: The review process will be led by an agreed upon Joint Committee. CHF will provide reviewers and DCA and DCAF may also recommend reviewers once the proposals are received.
3. Selection and Approval: A research proposal will be selected no later than June 30, 2016. Selection will be based on the scientific merit of the submitted research. Once the research is selected a recommendation for funding will be made to DCAF/DCA for their approval.

I thought the Early Onset Renal Disease study group had identified a researcher. Why do we have to go through a formal Request for Proposal process?

The Study Group did identify a researcher. This researcher provided information and assistance that has been invaluable to the Study Group's ability to drive this research request. This researcher will be solicited as part of the request for proposal that is sent to the larger research community. It is common practice to open research proposals up to a wider audience. Through the process CHF will ensure that DCA/DCAF is gaining access to the most advanced research available.

What will happen once the researcher is selected?

Once the researcher is selected, he or she will define the details of the study. There are many variations of Renal Disease. This study is focused on identifying the marker for Early Onset Renal Disease (Juvenile Renal Disease). The instructions we receive will include information on what is needed: Kidney biopsy tissue samples, Blood samples, pedigree study, etc. The researcher will help us make decisions on candidate animals that match the protocol. With the assistance of the researcher, we will be able to provide specific guidance and select animals that match the specific criteria required for the study.

What about the Idexx SDMA (Symmetric dimethylarginine) test that is available to test for Renal Disease? How does this test help us?

The serum creatinine test is the standard test used to confirm renal disease. Unfortunately this test is only able to accurately diagnose renal disease after 75% of the kidney function is lost. Idexx has developed the SDMA test for renal disease. This test is a generic marker of glomerular filtration rate (i.e. overall kidney function). As kidney function declines evidence of the marker increases. This test has been more successful in small breed animals and dogs with poor muscle mass. Consult with your veterinarian if you suspect your dog may have Renal Disease.

What if I have a dog that is symptomatic now?

If you have a dog that is symptomatic you should consult with your veterinarian to have your animal tested. Your vet will recommend the best test for your animal, and if diagnosed, work with you on a method of care specific to your animal's needs. You can contribute to the study by contributing a blood sample to the OFA blood draw. See instructions below.

How can I support the study?

DCA/DCAF will need blood samples from both healthy and sick animals for all research going forward – whether for renal disease or other future research. Your participation in the OFA blood draw is a great way to show support for research that improves the health of our breed.

Along with contributing blood samples to OFA, you can also support DCAF by contributing to the various fund raising events held throughout the year.

Or you can make a donation directly to DCAF by either sending a check or making a donation through PayPal. You can contribute to DCAF by going to <http://www.dcaf.org/contribute.html>

How do I submit blood samples to OFA?

You can register on line by going to www.offa.org. Click on the tab: DNA Bank. Scroll to the bottom of the page and in the Laboratories section you will find instructions for submission of blood samples. The cost of the kit is \$20 and does not include shipping.

What are the symptoms of Renal Disease?

Symptoms of renal disease can be nonspecific and may be seen in other disorders such as liver or pancreatic diseases, or urinary tract disorders not involving the kidneys. Signs may include: Increased water consumption, increased urination volume, decreased or lack of urination, voiding urine during the night, blood in the urine, decreased appetite, vomiting, weight loss, lethargy, diarrhea, hunched over posture, poor coat condition. You may also notice a change in the odor of your dog's breath. When a dog gets azotemic (elevated BUN and creatinine) the breath will have a uremic odor. You should contact your veterinarian if your animal exhibits any of these symptoms.