



HEALTH ISSUE: Chondrodysplasia (ChD)

DESCRIPTION: Chondrodysplasia (also known as 'Dwarfism') is a genetic (inherited) skeletal disorder that occurs in the Alaskan Malamute. ChD is a simple autosomal recessive gene, meaning that to produce chondrodysplastic offspring both parents must be carriers.

Breeding two carriers together can produce chondrodysplastic offspring. A carrier bred to an unaffected (or 'clear') will produce clear and carrier offspring and all will appear 'normal', but an unknown number will be carrier's for the disease. There is also an associated inherited, haemolytic anaemia with ChD.

SYMPTOMS: The chondrodysplastic Malamute displays the following physical (phenotypic) characteristics in varying degrees: Excessively shortened front limbs with varying degrees of deformity and bowing, especially the long bones (radius and ulna); A top line that slopes from the pelvis down to the withers, as opposed to the top line in an unaffected Malamute which slopes from the withers down to the pelvis.

Some Malamutes with ChD display a severe degree of deformity while others display almost no visible characteristics at all. Importantly, recessive carriers of the ChD gene display no outward, physical, identifying characteristics, being completely normal in appearance.

KNOWN TESTING: In puppies between 5 and 12 weeks of age it is possible to detect the deformity using x-ray of the front limbs however, at this time, there is no DNA test available for ChD.

CURRENT RESEARCH: The University of Helsinki (supported by a grant from the Canine Health Foundation) is currently conducting a research programme using DNA from affected dogs and known carriers which will hopefully lead to the discovery of a DNA marker, and ultimately a test, for the disease.

Contact information for the research programme: Kaisa Kyostila
kaisa.kyostila@helsinki.fi Ranja Eklund/Lohi Laboratory Biomedicum Helsinki, room
B320 Haartmaninkatu 8 00290 Helsinki Finland.



Alaskan Malamute Rescue is run by the Alaskan Malamute Club of the UK