

Press release: August 1, 2012

VCA Welfare Foundation

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The VCA Welfare Foundation has unanimously approved collaboration with Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine to launch a PILOT study to identify and map the gene(s) for Mast Cell Tumor (MCT) cancer in the Vizsla.

This PILOT study will initially analyze, from blood samples, the DNA of 25 dogs affected with MCT and 25 dogs control dogs (unaffected). All submissions will be kept confidential and require the owner's commitment to participate in the study for the life of the dog; i.e., continually update every dog's health records.

Affected dogs must be a documented case of MCT, and submissions should include a histopathology report. Additionally, all participants will be asked to submit a three-generation (minimum) pedigree, any OFA and/or Penn Hip information and to complete a short health questionnaire for each dog. Control dogs must be 8 years and older and be examined by an oncologist. The VCA WF hopes to set up "examination" days around the country to make it easy for Vizsla owners to submit "control" dogs.

In the 2008 Vizsla Health Survey, Mast Cell Tumor Cancer was the #1 cancer for c. 6% of the dogs surveyed. We fear that number has only increased over the last five years. For this reason, this PILOT study and the subsequent genetic map will be an important investment in future health and welfare of our breed.

To participate and request a sample submission kit, please contact Liz Corey at the Cornell University DNA Bank by email (eg33@cornell.edu). For general questions, please contact the Cornell University DNA Bank by email (dnabank@cornell.edu) or by phone (607/253.3446).

All questions about the parameters of this study and/or about how to participate may be directed to Lynda Ruffini, VCA Health Committee Chair (thebirdhuntress@stny.rr.com) or to Elise Wright, VCA WF Board Member (olympicvizslas@gmail.com).