

Dear Deerhound owners

During our recent owner/breeder forum at the Vet School here in Nottingham, you informed us of the conditions that affected your dogs and which troubled you most. One of these was the bone tumour called osteosarcoma. We are already undertaking research into this condition and have a number of active projects with other breeds. We are therefore looking to involve the owners and breeders of Deerhounds in this work in order to help investigate this tumour for you.

The initial aspect of this study will require details of affected dogs and their relatives, we will contact you about this aspect in due course. This will enable us to review the frequency at which the condition occurs and understand some aspects of how it develops.

We also feel investigating the genetics of osteosarcoma in Deerhounds in the UK will be of value to the breed. To do this we obtain DNA swabs from the mouth of dogs (affected and unaffected) then investigate the genes that may influence the development or progression of this tumour. The first phase of collecting these DNA swabs is due to take place at the annual show in April this year.

Another aspect, which is crucial to understanding as much about this tumour as possible, is acquiring samples from the tumours themselves. We very much appreciate that asking for samples from Deerhounds that are affected with this dreadful tumour is an emotional part of the study. We also realise that this part of the study is of no immediate benefit to these dogs, however the information that we gain will enable us to help dogs affected by this disease in the future. In this part of the project we are asking for samples from dogs with a (suspected or confirmed) osteosarcoma that are having biopsies for diagnostic purposes or surgical treatment. We do not require additional samples but will use a portion of the sample that your vet takes. We would very much appreciate it if you could contact us by email (direct this in the first instance to: [mark.dunning@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:mark.dunning@nottingham.ac.uk)) to let us know when your dog is about to undergo investigations to diagnose or treat a possible osteosarcoma. At this point we can discuss sending the special preservation liquid to your vet so that the samples can be preserved and then analysed appropriately.

The initial costs at the start of this project are being incorporated into other funding already in place. As the project develops we will need to look at sources of research funding, as the costs with genetic studies can be substantial. We are, however, at least able to begin investigating this tumour and develop some preliminary data with our existing resources.

Many thanks so far for all of your interest in this initiative; we hope it leads to some very important developments in the understanding of osteosarcoma in Deerhounds. Updates of the projects' progress will be posted via the Deerhounds forums along with the Nottingham Vet School Website.

With best wishes



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