

## CANINE EYE DISEASES:

Our BRT's like many other breeds of dogs, can suffer from a few different eye problems. And therefore specialist eye examinations done by a board certified ophthalmologist is usually part of the requirement for a CHIC number. And that is true for our Black Russian Terriers.

At present time, there is only a genetic test for PRA and not one for Cataracts for our Black Russian Terriers. So regular screening for eye disease(s) is important. Unfortunately more than a few eye diseases may only show up after 3+ years or so. And just as a note Cataracts if shown to be present prior to 6 years old are called Juvenile Cataracts and are thought to be inherited.

Many breeders will screen their breeding stock for the presence of PRA and or Cataracts and other eye diseases thought to be inherited, this screening is called CERF. What the screening means is at the test time your breeding dog is free of any inheritable or other type of eye disease. At present, this is the only and best option breeders have.

As a pet owner one area you don't want to fool around with are your dog's eyes. If you keep their hair fall long, you need to examine their eyes daily, and remove any "gunk" from the inner corners. Also we do tend to tie up the hair into what I call a samurai knot for the males, and a topknot for the females. Excessive tearing, redness of the eye rims or whites of their eyes, a cloudy film over some part of the eye, excessive pawing at their eyes, unequal pupils, droopy eye, third eyelid etc. are all signs that something is going on with your dog's eyes; and a vet appointment is in order. So get to know your dog's eyes, spend some time weekly to gaze into your dog's eyes in full sunlight, what you should see are clear and bright irises (the colored part of the eye) and clear whites of the eyes.

Below is an article extracted from the American College of Veterinary Ophthalmologists' website.

### TESTING FOR GENETIC EYE DISEASES IN DOGS: SOURCE:

[http://www.acvo.org/new/public/common\\_diseases/genetic\\_testing.shtml](http://www.acvo.org/new/public/common_diseases/genetic_testing.shtml)

Genetic testing for several inherited canine vision disorders is available to dog owners and breeders. Among the tests available are those for several forms of progressive retinal atrophy, retinal dysplasia, primary lens luxation and cataracts. Unfortunately, not all inherited eye disease in all breeds can be tested for at this time.

Breeders will no longer have to remove affected or carrier dogs from the breeding program. These tests allow for selective breeding to genetically clear dogs, significantly decreasing the risk of producing affected puppies.

Tests are available to breeders, owners, and veterinary specialists. The tests require either a blood sample or a cheek swab. For more information about the tests available, where the individual tests are performed, what samples are necessary, and other new developments refer to the links for the laboratories below.

**OptiGen**, LLC, Cornell Business & Technology Park, 767 Warren Road, Suite 300, Ithaca, New York, 14850;  
[www.optigen.com](http://www.optigen.com)

**Animal Health Trust (AHT)**, Lanwades Park, Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 7UU; [www.aht.org.uk](http://www.aht.org.uk)

**University of Missouri**; [www.caninegeneticdiseases.net](http://www.caninegeneticdiseases.net)

**Orthopedic Foundation for Animals**, 2300 E Nifong Boulevard, Columbia, Missouri, 65201-3806;  
[www.offa.org/dnatesting/index.html](http://www.offa.org/dnatesting/index.html)

**VetGen**, 3728 Plaza Drive, Suite 1, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 48108; [www.vetgen.com](http://www.vetgen.com)

**PennGen**, School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Pennsylvania, 3900 Delancey Street, Room 4013, Philadelphia PA 19104-6010; [netapps.vet.upenn.edu/PennGen/SampleTesting/default.aspx](http://netapps.vet.upenn.edu/PennGen/SampleTesting/default.aspx)

**Antagene**, 2, allée des Sequoias, 69760 Limonest, France; [www.antagene.com](http://www.antagene.com)

**Genetic Technologies Ltd**, PO Box 115, Fitroy Vic 3065, Australia; [www.gtglabs.com](http://www.gtglabs.com)

**Genomia s.r.o.**, Teslova 3, 301 00 Pilsen, Czech Republic; [www.genomia.cz](http://www.genomia.cz)

**Genindexe**, 6, rue des sports, 17000 La Rochelle, France; [www.genindexe.com](http://www.genindexe.com)

**Genoscooper**, Genoscooper Oy, P.O. Box 36, 00501 Helsinki, Finland; [www.genoscooper.com/en/](http://www.genoscooper.com/en/)

**Health Gene**, Health Gene Corp, 2175 Keele St, Toronto, Ontario, Canada; [www.healthgene.com](http://www.healthgene.com)

**Laboklin**, 61 Mouldsworth Ave, Manchester M20 1GG, UK; [www.laboklin.co.uk](http://www.laboklin.co.uk)

**Inqabiotec**, 525 Walker Street, Muckleneuk, Pretoria 0002, South Africa

[www.inqabiotec.co](http://www.inqabiotec.co).

My research of genetic markers tests have yielded the following two sites. Note that there appears to be only a genetic marker test for Boston Terriers, Australian Shepherds and Staffordshire Bull Terriers.

<http://jhered.oxfordjournals.org/content/98/5/531.full>

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1463-5224.2006.00496.x/abstract>