

Ref: Nash AS. Familial renal disease in dogs. J Sm Anim Pract 1989;. 30:178–183.

"Breeder/owner factors

(a) In the past, some breeders have been reluctant to disclose possible problems for fear of losing their reputation, reducing puppy sales and alienation from the breed society. However, persistence in this attitude eventually has the same effects, for the very reason they wished to conceal. By this time the disease has become more widely disseminated.

(b) Simple kidney function tests do not reveal the presence of renal failure until it is fairly advanced and clinical signs may not develop until the animal is over six months of age. Therefore, in most cases, affected animals are not recognised until after dispersal and are only identified when the disease is relatively far advanced.

(c) It is much more difficult to monitor a disease once litters have been dispersed. Even when breeders make strenuous efforts to follow-up their puppies they are not always successful. Owners move house without trace; puppies change hands without the knowledge of the breeder; and animals die or are euthanased for a variety of reasons unconnected with the disease in question, but their kidneys are not made available for examination. Moreover, even when renal failure is recognised, an owner may be far less motivated than the breeder to suffer the additional stress and expense of a post mortem examination, so valuable information is lost.

Other factors sited in this article include:

Animal factors

(a) In the diseases described, to date, carriers cannot be identified unless affected offspring are produced.

(b) Simple kidney function tests do not reveal the presence of renal failure until it is fairly advanced and clinical signs may not develop until the animal is over six months of age. Therefore, in most cases, affected animals are not recognised until after dispersal and are only identified when the disease is relatively far advanced.

(c) Renal failure may be due to a variety of underlying causes and not every animal with renal failure, however young, is necessarily affected by the familial problem in that particular breed, thus underlining the need **for** detailed investigations, including post mortem examinations, both to confirm the suspected renal failure

Veterinary factors

(a) Breeders should inform their veterinary surgeon of the problem as it is likely that information will be available through breed society communications long before it reaches the veterinary

literature. Even then, there is no guarantee that individual veterinary surgeons will read it or retain the information if they do.

(b) Breeders should encourage their veterinary surgeons to find out what tests can be done and where to send material for testing. Reliance on results from practice and commercial laboratories may not assist the central collation of data.

(c) Breeders should encourage purchasers of puppies to ensure that their veterinary surgeon is aware of the problem and adequately informed as to diagnostic and database services available. It will only be as the links already established between dog breeders, owners, veterinary surgeons and geneticists are maintained and strengthened that there can be any hope for eventual control and possible eradication of these conditions. “