

GRIFFY HEALTH WATCH

If you have started reading this article, then it looks like the bold type below may have sparked your attention. Yes, it's true. While reading the breed columns in the July 2008 issue of the AKC Gazette I came across this astonishing statement in an article about German Pinchers. It's amazing where you can find all sorts of information. I immediately contacted the author to inquire as to where this information came from and how I might confirm it. They were extremely cooperative and the source of the information was easy to contact. The information came from the American Veterinary College of Ophthalmologists, fifth edition, AVCO version, 2007 ... as quoted below ...

“Ocular disorders, proven or presumed to be inherited in purebred dogs, have been a topic of intense dialogue by Diplomats of the American College of Veterinary Ophthalmologists (AVCO) for many years. Discussions commenced in the latter half of the 20th Century, and will no doubt continue for years to come. Our knowledge of the existence, nature, progression, and inheritance of ocular disorders continues to expand as this field of veterinary science evolves. The Genetics Committee of the AVCO was originally formed in response to requests by registries, breed groups and veterinarians, with the intent to provide a scientific advisory panel and guidelines regarding ocular disorders in purebred dogs. The Genetics Committee of today remains engaged in an ongoing effort to update information on ocular disorders for this purpose.

The generation of statistical information is made possible by the efforts of dedicated breeders of purebred dogs who present their dogs to Diplomats of the American College of Veterinary Ophthalmologists for Canine Eye Registration Foundation (CERF) examinations. The research copies of the CERF forms are then conscientiously submitted to the registry by the examining Veterinary Ophthalmologists. CERF enters the data into the computer data bank and generates annual statistics. The statistics for each breed are then reviewed yearly by the Genetics Committee for the most recent year and from the previous 5 years.” Based on their findings for 2007 ...

Of all AKC breeds, the Brussels Griffon ranks #2, with incidence of Hereditary Cataracts, at 14.8%.

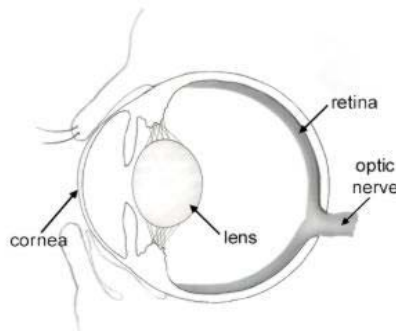
Back in 2004 the ABGA completed its first comprehensive Health Survey. At that time we had reports on 795 dogs with only 6.7% reporting incidences of Hereditary Cataracts. Since 2004 the incidence rate has more than doubled. Sadly, testing information is not widely shared. Owners usually do not submit test results on affected dogs. Hence, there are potentially many more affected dogs that are not in the CERF data base.

Please CERF your dogs prior to breeding a litter, and continue to do annual CERF tests. Many of the most common forms of hereditary cataracts do not show up in a dog until 4-6 years of age. By then you could have produced several litters from affected dogs. Thus, the progeny could be affected, and if either the sire or dam was affected the progeny will definitely be carriers. Therefore, sires and dams should continue to be tested long after they have been bred.

For the future Health of the Brussels Griffon, Please participate in Champions for Health,

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Grigalunas – ABGA Health Committee Chairman



Adapted from D Slatter, Fundamentals of Veterinary Ophthalmology, 1990, Philadelphia, WB Saunders