**WHEEZER DISEASE IN AK HUSKIES**
**IS THIS SYNDROME INHERITED OR NOT?**

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**CONGENITAL LARYNGEAL PARALYSIS IN ALASKAN HUSKIES**

*Congenital laryngeal paralysis* is when a pup has dysfunction of the nerves which control opening and closing of the larynx (voicebox). In affected animals, the upper airway fails to open adequately during inhalation. The term ‘congenital’ refers to a disorder that is present at birth.

**Signs:** Pups are frequently called “wheezers” because of the typical sound of their breathing. They are intolerant of any marked exertion and may also have swallowing or regurgitation issues. Severely affected wheezers are reported to “run about 100 yards, then collapse, gasping and turning blue”.

**Reported breeds:** Bouvier des Flandres, Siberian Huskies and crossbreeds, Bull Terriers, and white-coated German Shepherd dogs. Additionally, Dalmations, Rottweilers, Pyrenean Mountain and Leonberger dogs have been seen with congenital laryngeal paralysis associated with other neurologic signs. Some of these disorders have been shown to be inherited (transmitted from one or both parents).

**Age affected:** Puppy or juvenile. It is suspected this syndrome is an inherited condition in the Alaskan Husky.

**Common traits:** Blue eyes, black and white or white hair coat, especially on the face; “freckles”; hard oral mucosal tags.

**Outcome:** Apparently some wheezers compensate and show improvement as they age. The reason for this cannot currently be explained. Even some Iditarod finishers reportedly have been wheezers as puppies. Conversely, some affected puppies require surgery to survive. Surgical treatment is recommended in severe cases and usually provides immediate and long-term improved quality of life.

Please turn over for additional information.
We are currently collecting pedigrees and blood samples for DNA testing from “Wheezers”. Mushers or pet owners with affected dogs are encouraged to contact Dr. von Pfeil, Dr. Stanley or Michele Fritz (Study Coordinator) at: wheezercvm.msu.edu. (More contact information below).

Alternatively, you can contact your regular veterinarian if interested in participating.

**WHEEZEER** STUDY DETAILS

**Goals:**
1) Determine the incidence of congenital laryngeal paralysis in the Alaskan Husky.
2) Describe the presentation, clinical signs, progression and outcome of the disorder in detail.
3) Perform genetic testing (by blood test) on affected and normal dogs to identify genetic cause.
4) Perform pedigree analysis on affected dogs.

At this time, even if clinically normal later in life, wheezers should not be used for breeding. It is recommended that affected dogs be neutered in an effort to prevent passing the disease to their offspring. If this disease is shown to be inherited, selective breeding could eliminate the disease from the gene pool.

**Owner Involvement:** Consent to collect a pedigree and blood sample from your dog. There are no costs associated with study participation.

**Additional Contact Information:**
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**Complete information below and fax to:** 517-432-9904  **Attn:** Michele Fritz **RE:** WHEEZEER STUDY

Owner Name: ________________________________  
Address: ________________________________  
Phone: ________________________________  
E-mail: ________________________________  

Dog Name: ________________________________  
Birth date: ________________________________  

Sex:  
☐ Male  
☐ Female  
☐ Neutered / Spayed

Breeder Name: ________________________________  
City / State: ________________________________

Your Dog’s clinical signs: ________________________________

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**PLEASE MARK ONE:**

☐ YES, I am interested in finding out more about enrolling my dog into the “Wheezler” study

☐ YES, I have an available pedigree  
☐ NO, I do not have a pedigree available