



Health Testing

NorthPaws follows The Kennel Clubs guidance relating to health testing for our dogs.

The Kennel club have two categories of testing: required and recommended.

Required testing:

These are health tests and screening schemes that **must** be carried out by breeders and need to be carried out on any male and female dogs before they are used for mating

Recommended testing:

These tests can include anything that impacts the health or welfare of the breeding dogs, or the puppies they produce

We do all the **required** testing with our cavaliers and only use studs who have been tested to the same standard:

Heart Screening: carried out by a cardiologist (not as part of a routine 'vet check') who will use two non-invasive techniques to check the dog's heart.

Using a stethoscope they listen to the heart for signs of a murmur. A heart murmur is an unusual sound made by the heart during its cycle of beating and can be a sign of heart disease. An echocardiogram is used to scan the heart valves to assess for mitral valve disease (MVD). This is a type of heart disease that is caused by a valve in the heart leaking. This leaking valve can get worse over time and can cause the heart to become enlarged and less effective. Their findings will be used to give the dog a murmur grade and a MVD grade.

Eye screening: carried out by a BVA approved eye specialist who will not just look for signs of inherited eye disease, but also the general health of the eye and adnexa (eyelids, tear ducts and other parts around the eye ball).

Inherited eye disease for Cavalier King Charles:

Hereditary cataract (HC): A clouding of the lens within the eye. It is caused by abnormal genetic factors passed from one generation to the next.

Multifocal retinal dysplasia (MRD): An abnormality of development of the light sensitive layer of the eye, the retina. It occurs whilst the puppy is developing within the womb before it is born. It is caused by abnormal genetic factors and is passed from one generation to the next.

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DNA Testing: autosomal recessive condition are tested for using a cheek swab. Dogs must inherit two copies of an abnormal gene (one from its mother and one from its father) before its health is affected. A dog that inherits only one copy of the abnormal gene (from its mother or its father) will have no signs of the disease, but will be a carrier and may pass the gene on to any offspring.

For Cavalier King Charles:

Episodic Falling (EF): EF is a neurological condition, induced by exercise, excitement or frustration, in which muscle tone increases. This means the dog is unable to relax its muscles, causing the dog to become rigid and falls over. Affected dogs usually start to demonstrate clinical signs before one year of age, with most cases having their first episode aged 4-7 months. Clinical signs vary in severity ranging from mild, occasional falling to freezing or seizure-like episodes lasting hours. Severity of the episodes can increase or decrease as the dog gets older. There is no standard pattern to the attacks.

Dry eye/Curly Coat (DE/CC): This condition affects a dog's skin and eyes. Affected dogs are unable to produce tears due to the lack of watery secretions from the lacrimal glands, making their eyes very sore. Their skin becomes very dry and flaky, particularly around the foot, and this can make walking and standing difficult and painful. Curly coat can be apparent at birth with a dry and unusually curly coat, excessive oiliness, skin deterioration and inflammation. Dogs with dry eye show their discomfort by rubbing their eyes, squinting and being sensitive to light. Their eye(s) may be inflamed and reddened, or the cornea may appear dry and dull. There is commonly a thick mucus discharge in the eye or in the area around the eye.

For Poodle:

Degenerative Myelopathy (DM): is a disease that affects the spinal cord in dogs, causing progressive muscle weakness and loss of coordination. It acts similarly to Lou Gehrig's disease, or ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis), in humans.

Von Willebrand Disease (VWD): It is the most common inherited bleeding disorder in dogs. Dogs with VWD may show signs of bleeding, such as skin bruising, bleeding from the gums or nose, and excessive bleeding during surgery.

Neonatal Encephalopathy (NE): "Encephalopathy" refers to a disease affecting the brain. Thus, Neonatal Encephalopathy means a disease of the brain that becomes apparent soon after pups

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are born. Affected pups have been weak, uncoordinated, and mentally dull from birth. If they survive the first few days, they nurse adequately.

Muscular Dystrophy (MD): this refers to a group of over thirty genetic conditions in dogs that cause a breakdown in the muscles involved with movement.

Progressive Retinal Atrophy (PRA): causes cells in the retina at the back of the eye to degenerate and die, even though the cells may have developed normally in early life. The cells of the retina receive light from the outside and transmits the information to the brain where it is interpreted to become vision. Owners of affected dogs first notice that their dog becomes night blind, but this eventually progresses to total blindness. The age of onset of first signs varies from breed to breed, however, in all cases puppies are born with perfect vision and their sight begins to degenerate later in life, from around 3 years of age or later.