OFA Thyroid Registry Information

General Thyroid Information:

Autoimmune thyroiditis is the most common cause of primary hypothyroidism in dogs. The disease has variable onset, but tends to clinically manifest itself at 2 to 5 years of age. Dogs may be clinically normal for years, only to become hypothyroid at a later date. The marker for autoimmune thyroiditis, thyroglobulin autoantibody formation, usually occurs prior to the occurrence of clinical signs. Therefore, periodic retesting is recommended.

The majority of dogs that develop autoantibodies have them by 3 to 4 years of age. Development of autoantibodies to any time in the dog’s life is an indication that the dog, most likely, has the genetic form of the disease. Using today’s technology only a small fraction of false positive tests occur.

As a result of the variable onset of the presence of autoantibodies, periodic testing will be necessary. Dogs that are negative at 1 year of age may become positive at 6 years of age. Dogs should be tested every year or two in order to be certain they have not developed the condition. Since the majority of affected dogs will have autoantibodies by 4 years of age annual testing for the first 4 years is recommended. After that, testing every other year should suffice. Unfortunately, a negative at any one time will not guarantee that the dog will not develop thyroiditis.

Breeders in determining which dogs are best for their breeding program can use the registry data. Knowing the status of the dog and the status of the dogs lineage, breeders and genetic counselors can decide which matings are most appropriate for reducing the incidence of autoimmune thyroiditis in the offspring.

OFA Thyroid Procedures:

Purpose
To identify those dogs that are phenotypically normal for breeding programs and to gather data on the genetic disease autoimmune thyroiditis

Examination and Classification
Each dog is to be examined by an attending veterinarian and have a serum sample sent to an OFA approved laboratory for testing according to the enclosed application and general information instructions. The approved laboratory will
determine the laboratory fee. All OFA forms and the OFA fee are submitted with the sample to the approved lab. Check with the referral laboratory for special sample handling and tests for registry purposes.

**Certification:**
A breed database number will be issued to all dogs found to be normal at 12 months of age. Ages will be used in the certification process since the classification can change as the dog ages and the autoimmune disease progresses. It is recommended that reexamination occur at ages 2,3,4,6, and 8 years.

**Preliminary Evaluation**
Evaluation of dogs under 12 months of age can be performed for private use of the owner since the few dogs are already positive at that age. However, certification will not be possible at that age.

**Dogs with Autoimmune Thyroiditis**
All data, whether normal or abnormal is to be submitted for purposes of completeness. There is no OFA fee for entering an abnormal evaluation of the thyroid into the data bank. Information on results determined to be positive or equivocal will not be made public without explicit written permission of the owner.

**Thyroid abnormalities fall into several categories—the registry defines two types:**

**Autoimmune Thyroiditis is known to be heritable**

**Idiopathically Reduced Thyroid Function**

**Equivocal Results**
Those dogs with laboratory results that are questionable, therefore not definitive, will be considered as equivocal. It is recommended that the test be repeated in three to six months.

**Approved Thyroid Labs**
The laboratory certification process will include quality control, quality assurance and reagent certification. Laboratories may apply and, if successful, will be approved to perform analysis for OFA thyroid certification. A site visit by a qualified veterinary endocrinologist chosen by the OFA will be required and continued quality assurance and quality control will be necessary to maintain certification. Fully certified status can be obtained by passing the site visit and passing the results of the first OFA quality assurance assay result test. The approved laboratory must be contacted for the appropriate submission forms,
sample handling procedures and laboratory service fee before collecting the sample.

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Please use an OFA Thyroid VMTH submission form and an OFA Application for Thyroid Database form when requesting this test.