

Bracco Italiano Breed Health Information

Kidney failure, a possible problem in the Bracco Italiano

There have been 5 confirmed cases of Kidney failure in the Bracco Italiano reported to the society. 4 of which have happened in the last 3 years. Therefore the Health Sub Committee have decided to issue the following information and advice.

In the 4 recent cases, there was no single cause of the kidney failure. Mio Benadetta Del Conbrio died of amyloidosis. (see notes below) others, previously reported, died from secondary kidney failure to infection and some, previously reported, had little information on the reasons for the kidney failure. (see health report 2008-2009)

In light of this information, the committee have been working closely with a referral vet who dealt with one of the cases of kidney failure. This vet is highly qualified in the field of internal medicine for both canines and felines and is working in a referral practice that specialises in internal medicine. The vets at this practise lecture in internal medicine and regularly write in veterinary periodicals. The committee have decided to work closely with this vet to ensure that all information available will be given to this vet who will, in time, produce a veterinary paper on the kidney health of the Bracco Italiano and will try to resolve the issue of the possible hereditary nature of the kidney failure.

To this end the committee would like to ask owners of dogs who have kidney failure to contact them in order to gain as much information as possible. We would ask that owners do the following

1. Allow the health co-ordinator and our vet access to kidney test results and biopsies.
2. Members to ask their vet to use Langford vets to do all kidney pathology if your vet thinks biopsies are needed. Langford vets are the commercial arm of Bristol University. Using one pathology lab for all samples will ensure continuity of pathology reports and will assist our vet in forming final opinions on the nature of kidney problems in the breed.
http://www.langfordvets.co.uk/diagnostic_laboratories.htm
3. Allow the society to take kidney biopsies from dogs that have died from kidney failure, when live samples were not taken. The society will pay for the post-mortem costs to do this.
4. Allow the society to pass on pedigree details to our vet which would be confidential to the vet.

Although several dogs that have been reported with kidney failure are related it would be presumptuous for us to think this is a familial problem restricted to one line. Therefore all members need to be aware of kidney issues within the breed. To this end the health committee would like to make the following recommendations to members.

1. All dogs have a kidney function test with their annual health check
2. All dogs have a kidney function test before they have any surgery
3. All dogs have a kidney function test if they are failing to recover from other conditions

4. All dogs have a kidney function test before they are to be bred from
5. Any dog with poor kidney function is not bred from

Kidney function tests vary from vets to vets. On the advice of vets and veterinary laboratories the following would be the minimum requirements.

1. Urinalysis
2. Blood creatinine
3. Blood urea nitrogen (BUN)

Unfortunately even blood and urine tests will not always show the very early stages of kidney failure therefore regular testing should be the norm.

Positive test results do not mean the dog will go into kidney failure. There are a host of other reasons that kidney function tests could vary from the norm. Many cases are the result of infection and can be cleared by antibiotics. Your vet will be able to advise you in individual cases. However, regular testing will ensure that any possible problems are picked up early and can be managed by your vet to give a better prognosis in the longer term.

Finally we would like to thank those members who have come forward with information on the death of their dogs at what must have been truly traumatic times. Their bravery will help other dogs in the breed.

Produced with information from the health committee.

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For Information

"Kidney amyloidosis is a rare disorder of protein metabolism in which abnormal deposits of protein called amyloid is deposited in the kidneys. The cause of kidney amyloidosis remains poorly understood. It is a hereditary condition in certain breeds of dog. It also may occur in other breeds or mixed breeds as a reaction to chronic infections and inflammatory conditions.

Most dogs with kidney amyloidosis are old at the time of diagnosis (9 is average age). The disease can occur in any age or breed, with one study showing Beagles, Collies, and Walker Hounds at increased risk, and German Shepherds and mixed-breed dogs at lower risk. It is a hereditary disorder in Shar-pei dogs.

Amyloid deposits in the kidney lead to excessive protein loss in the urine and eventual chronic kidney failure. Amyloid may also be deposited in other organs like the liver, spleen and pancreas, causing them to malfunction as well." <http://www.petplace.com/dogs/renal-kidney-amyloidosis-in-dogs/page1.aspx>

“It is important to realize that amyloidosis occurs in all dog breeds and in a number of inflammatory and immune-mediated conditions. The majority of amyloidosis in dogs is idiopathic or of unknown cause. Amyloidosis can occur secondary to heartworm disease, tick-borne diseases, various cancers, systemic lupus, immune-mediated arthritis, IBD, etc. I suspect that the tendency to develop amyloidosis in response to inflammatory or immune-mediated disease or triggers is a separate genetic disease in dogs which leads to failure to degrade amyloid, failure to excrete amyloid degradation products or increased production of amyloid precursors” <http://www.drjwv.com/article.php?view=0001.php>

Useful Websites

<http://www.dogaware.com/health/kidneytests.html>

http://www.petmd.com/dog/conditions/endocrine/c_dg_hepatic_amyloidosis

http://pethealth.petwellbeing.com/wiki/Dog_Kidney_Disease

<http://www.articlesbase.com/pets-articles/canine-kidney-disease-822238.html>

<http://www.sniksnak.com/doghealth/kidney.html>

<http://www.peteducation.com/article.cfm?c=2+1634&aid=350>