

March 2011

Information for you and your veterinarian can be found here:
www.vai.org/helpingdogs

Cancer Study Information:

AWSC, Inc. was given a unique opportunity to become involved in genetic studies when Dr. Roe Froman, DVM, Van Andel Research Institute (VARI), spoke at the National Specialty in August, 2010. Due to connections she made with members, we found out about a new health research opportunity for all purebred dogs.

The Cancer Study is a wide-ranging, inclusive, all-breed study being conducted by the Canine Hereditary Cancer Consortium (CHCC), a new center of excellence in canine genetics. This is an unprecedented national alliance of veterinarians, basic scientists, and clinicians put together by the Van Andel Research Institute, Grand Rapids, Michigan, and the Translational Genomics Research Institute, Phoenix, Arizona, with a "Grand Opportunities" grant from the National Institutes of Health. With this funding, this is a one-time opportunity to make an incredible difference in the diagnosis and treatment of cancer in not only humans but also dogs.

Many tumors considered rare in humans are relatively common in certain breeds of dogs. This indicates that there is an underlying hereditary or genetic component to this disease. The study will identify the underlying genetics and biochemical pathways that contribute to these diseases, and then translate these discoveries to humans and dogs.

In the next two years the CHCC will focus their efforts on unraveling the genetic causes of several cancers, including but not limited to: [hemangiosarcoma](#), [osteosarcoma](#), [melanoma](#), [malignant histiocytic sarcoma](#), and [lymphoma](#).

How to Participate: *Any purebred dog is welcome to participate. Samples are collected by you with easy Buccal swabs. **Additional samples are needed from dogs diagnosed with cancer.***

Contact VARI to obtain collection materials and informed consent sheets. Shipping is covered!
(AWSC and VARI are also conducting a Pattern Baldness study. Materials and consent forms may be ordered together.)

Angela Rhoades, VARI, 616-234-5437 or
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If your dog has been diagnosed with cancer:

A cancer diagnosis in your dog is devastating to you and your family. As we know, it is often untreatable or treatment is beyond the monetary means of many families. Though heartbreaking for all involved, samples from your dog's cancer can be entered into this study and may make a difference in the life of another dog or a person in the future.

Any purebred dog with cancer may have blood and tumor samples sent to VARI at no charge. The collection of the samples will be as part of the normal treatment or post-mortem of your dog, but *VARI will provide the collection materials and shipping costs*. Arrangements must be scheduled between VARI and your veterinarian prior to sample collection. All other costs are your own. Talk to your veterinarian about this study and charges they may or may not apply to sample gathering.

In general the CHCC requires the following for participation in the study:

Dogs must have a diagnosis of cancer from a licensed veterinarian and be in good enough health to tolerate diagnostic procedures (*i.e.* radiographs, blood draw and biopsy) and treatment. The affected dog can be male or female, intact or spayed/neutered.

Dogs must be at least 4 months of age.

Tumor samples are being accepted from both mixed breed and purebred dogs. Blood samples are being accepted only from purebred dogs since the studies are focusing on the DNA within and between breeds of dogs, according to the CHCC.

Veterinarians must contact the CHCC at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled procedure. Special shipping media, materials and pertinent instructions will be shipped overnight, via Federal Express, to the attending veterinarian.

- The owner of the affected dog must read and sign a VARI Canine Hereditary Cancer Consortium General Owner Consent Form.

--Information regarding this study, VARI and CHCC was condensed from the VARI website: www.vai.org/helpingdogs and Veterinary Practice News, June 15, 2010