

## Lafora

*Lafora disease is an inherited form of epilepsy that affects a small but so far unknown proportion of miniature wire hair dachshunds.*

*The condition typically only becomes apparent any time from the age of 5 onwards and can take the form of major fitting, jerking of the head, apparent blindness, dementia and unsteadiness on the feet.*

*Dogs that are 'Affected' by the disease or are 'Carriers' of the genetic mutation, are at risk of producing more Affected puppies if they are bred from.*

*Like to know more? **Laforadogs** supports the Wirehaired Dachshund Club's work to eradicate this distressing condition. See inside for more information or log onto [www.laforadogs.org](http://www.laforadogs.org).*



**Caption describing picture or graphic.**



**www.laforadogs.org**  
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Raising Awareness of  
Lafora Disease

## Could your dog be affected?



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## What is Lafora Disease?

Lafora Disease is an inherited form of epilepsy which can occur spontaneously in any breed of dog, but it particularly affects the miniature wire-haired dachshund. Typically signs first appear in animals over 5 years age and both sexes can be affected.

Myoclonus (jerking) is a feature of the disease and characteristically this can be induced by flashing lights, sudden sounds and movement, especially when close to the dog's head. Generalised or complex partial seizures may be seen in some dogs. The disease progresses slowly over many years and gradually other neurological deficits such as ataxia, blindness and dementia occur.



### The Genetics of Lafora

The Toronto Hospital for Sick Children, with support from Dr Clare Rusbridge has identified Lafora as an inherited autosomal recessive disease. It appears likely that canine Lafora first appeared in the mini wire dachshund population in the UK as the result of a genetic mutation. This means that dog must have two of the mutated genes, one from each parent to be affected.

If a dog has only one Lafora gene, it will be a 'carrier'. It will not be affected, but if bred to another carrier or affected, at least some of the puppies born will receive the two genes and thus be affected. There is more information on genetics at [www.laforadogs.org](http://www.laforadogs.org).

### What Does This Mean to Me?

If you have a mini wire hair dachshund, and are considering breeding now or in the future, it is vital that you get your dog tested. Even if you don't intend to breed, it is still important to have the test. That way, if the worst happens and you find your dog is affected, you'll be prepared and can take action to reduce the impact on your dog. You'll also be able to advise the breeder of your dog, so that they are aware of the implications and can advise other puppy owners.

### WHDC Controlled Test Programme

The Wirehaired Dachshund Club will be arranging a saliva testing session at the Limited Show at Horspath on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> March, 2010. Swab samples will be taken from the mouth, and sent to Canada for testing, so results will not be available immediately.

The test will cost £50 per dog, and at first will be limited to members as the Club will be subsidising the costs. There are no restrictions on membership and you can join the WHDC on the day.

The WHDC are also holding a "reserve list" of people who can't make it to the show on the 27<sup>th</sup> March. Get in touch with Lesley Patton with details of the number of dogs to be tested and preferred testing location in the UK.

The Club hopes to test enough dogs to help identify the incidence of affected dogs in the mini wire population. Ideally, those dogs identified as affected should be removed from the breeding pool, immediately reducing the incidence of Lafora's disease. Based on the results, the Club will then take a decision on supporting a test to identify carriers and clear dogs.

The Club would like to encourage all miniature wire haired dachshund owners to have their dogs tested as soon as possible if they are planning to breed from them, so that affected or subclinically affected dogs can be identified. The parents and offspring of any dogs identified by the test as affected would then be known to be either affected, or carriers, with no testing necessary.

**Contact Lesley Patton on 07736 431090 (after 8pm only), email her at [lpatton@lesandnic.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:lpatton@lesandnic.fsnet.co.uk), or visit the WHDC stand at Crufts. Tests must be booked – on a first come first served basis – and KC registration documents must be produced for each dog tested.**

For more information about the Laforadogs support group, contact us via details below.



[www.laforadogs.org](http://www.laforadogs.org)

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