

## ***CEREBELLAR ABIOTROPHY (CA) IN SCOTTIES***

***Some Information and Contacts for you and your veterinarian.***



***What is Cerebellar Abiotrophy?*** It is a genetic neurological disease recently described in the Scottish Terrier. The term defines progressive, premature cell death in the cerebellum, an area of the brain that controls smooth, coordinated motor skills such as walking.

***What are the symptoms?*** Slow loss of motor skills, clumsiness, unsteady gait, wide based stance, loose and wobbly rear or roll of the hips. Dogs may trip, fall or have trouble negotiating stairs. It is progressive and, although it may become severe, it often remains relatively mild. It is not fatal. Personality, positive outlook and mentality are not affected. CA can be difficult to diagnose and may be confused with other conditions and movement disorders. There is no known treatment at this time.

***What is being done?*** In 2001, the HTF retained the services of Dr. Jerold Bell DVM, Assistant Professor of Genetics at Tufts University for the purpose of investigating the presence of CA in Scotties. Dr. Bell now assists owners and our research project. He asks that those who have a dog they suspect may have CA contact him for instructions on submitting information and a video for review by him and by renowned neurologist Dr. Alexander deLahunta. He offers complete confidentiality and there is no charge for this service. He can also recommend appropriate testing and make local referrals when/where additional diagnosis is needed. The STCA maintains a voluntary database of CA affected Scotties to help breeders in breeding away from this defect until a test can be found. Owners and/or breeders of diagnosed Scotties may elect to participate and must complete release forms supplied by STCA through Dr. Bell.

***How can I help?*** Owners of clinically diagnosed CA Scotties are strongly encouraged to join the research sponsored by the Health Trust Fund of STCA, through the AKC Canine Health Foundation. Dr. Natasha Olby leads a research team at North Carolina State University whose goal is to find the responsible gene and develop a test to eliminate CA in Scotties. Blood samples are needed from affected dogs, their parents, siblings and offspring. The more samples, the faster the research will go!

### **Additional Information**

**To get a video of what CA might look like in a Scottie:** Mrs. Debbie Smith,  
STCA CA Support Chairman, (814) 899-2856, E-mail: [LITLBLKDOG@aol.com](mailto:LITLBLKDOG@aol.com)

**To get information on diagnosis:** Dr. Jerold Bell, DVM,  
Veterinary Genetic Counseling, PO Box 3399, Enfield, CT 06083, E-mail: [Geneticvet@aol.com](mailto:Geneticvet@aol.com)  
*For help and instruction on how to make a 10-15 minute videotape of your dog on lead from the side, front and back; off lead from the side, front and back and going up and down a stairway*

**To participate in the research:** Ms. Pragna Mehta, at Dr. Olby's lab at  
North Carolina State University, e-mail [Pragna.Mehta@ncsu.edu](mailto:Pragna.Mehta@ncsu.edu) or (919) 513-7235  
*For forms and instructions for you and your veterinarian to submit blood samples from clinically diagnosed Scotties and/or their parents, siblings and offspring.*

**To learn more about CA on the STCA Website:** visit CA Central,  
Click on the Grand Central link on the STCA Home Page at <http://clubs.akc.org/stca>