TUFTS CUMMINGS SCHOOL OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

Your Dog

The Newsletter for Caring Dog Owners

CUMMINGS SEARCH FOR BLOOD SAMPLES

CUMMINGS' RESEARCH SEEKS BLOOD SAMPLES OF DOGS WITH THE DISEASE AND UNAFFECTED LARGE BREEDS

If you have a Golden Retriever or other breed with hemangiosarcoma, you might want to consider participating in a study of the disease's genetic risk factors at the Cummings School.

Chieko Azuma, DVM, Ph.D., assistant professor at the school's Harrington Oncology Program, and Dr. Kerstin Lindblad-Toh of Harvard's Broad Institute are working to compare the DNA of affected and unaffected dogs.

"We will use a newly developed, powerful analytical method to search for small differences in DNA patterns," Dr. Azuma said. *"Comparing these patterns will make it possible to identify the small region of the DNA associated with the disease. This should lead to the identification of genes predisposing a dog to hemangiosarcoma."*

"When results of the study are available, it may be possible to test for carriers of the disease and improve breeding programs," Dr. Azuma said. *"Ultimately, understanding the biology of this disease will lead to the prevention and effective treatment of canine hemangiosarcoma."*

She and Dr. Lindblad-Toh have begun collecting blood samples. *"Recently the AKC has informed us that the study is highly likely to be funded. We are also applying for other grants and encouraging private funding for this project because of the expenses required for genetic analysis."*

If your dog has hemangiosarcoma or is a normal large-breed dog without the disease, and you are interested in being part of the study, please ask your veterinarian to draw a blood sample and send it, together with medical records and pedigree information, to Dr. Chieko Azuma at the Harrington Oncology Program, the Cummings School, 200 Westboro Road, North Grafton, MA 01536. Large breeds, such as Golden Retrievers, seem to be predisposed to hemangiosarcomas.