**Dear Dr. OES,**

**My young dog has been drinking a lot and not acting quite right. My vet says he has kidney disease. How can this be?**

**Drinking in Duluth, IA**

Dear Drinking,

Renal (kidney) disease has been seen in puppies as young as 3 months of age as well as in older adults in many breeds, including Old English Sheepdogs.

Early signs of kidney disease include excessive thirst and urination, lack of appetite, vomiting, and weight loss. Unfortunately, 75% of kidney function must be lost before the disease can be detected through laboratory blood tests. Bloodwork will show elevated BUN (blood urea nitrogen) and Creatinine levels once the dog enters kidney failure. Since kidney tissue does not regenerate, the disease is ultimately fatal.

Treatment is very limited and consists of a low-protein diet to alleviate some of the work-load of the kidneys and fluids to help flush out toxins. Unlike in humans, kidney transplants in dogs are very rare.

If the dog was not exposed to toxic chemicals (such as Antifreeze), renal disease is inherited or congenital, meaning a disease present since birth. Congenital defects do occur, but as we learn more about this disease, what is thought to be congenital may actually be genetic. The mode of inheritance is not completely understood and more research is needed to identify the genes responsible.

The HRC is asking anyone who has an Old English Sheepdog with kidney disease to contact a member of the committee. As always, confidentiality is upheld. Submitting blood to the CHIC DNA Database will provide a valuable resource in developing a genetic marker for kidney disease.

Dr. OES



**Ask Dr. OES**

**A Column from the Health and Research Committee**

**Send your questions to oeshealth@gmail.com**

**Dear Dr. OES,**

**My Old English Sheepdog was diagnosed with Sebaceous Adenitis (SA) several years ago. We have had years of baths and treatments. I’m wondering why I don’t hear more about this disease. I cannot believe that I have the only OES with SA.**

**Losing It in Lafayette, LA**

Dear Losing It,

Sebaceous Adenitis is a skin condition involving inflammation of the sebaceous glands. The hair follicle is damaged and regrowth of hair is difficult. The clinical signs are hair loss and crusty skin lesions. Secondary bacterial and yeast infections often occur. Although the disease does not appear to be painful, the damage to the coat does not go away.

SA has a low frequency in Old English Sheepdogs and most hair loss and skin problems begin around 1-2 years of age.

The HRC reviewed data from all the health surveys performed (2004, 2009, 2017).  In 2004 and 2009, a specific question was asked about Sebaceous Adenitis.

In the 2004 survey, 8 females and 14 males (22 dogs total) had been diagnosed, which is 1.19% of the animals surveyed.  SA was the 3rd highest reported skin disease of that survey.

In the 2009 survey, 22 females and 12 males (34 dogs total) had been diagnosed, which is 2.05% of the animals surveyed.  It was again the 3rd highest skin issue reported in that survey.

WHAT CAN I DO TO PRESERVE THE OLD ENGLISH SHEEPDOG?

HELP THE HRC FIND GENETIC MARKERS FOR DISEASES AFFECTING OUR BREED.

SUBMIT YOUR DOG’S DNA SAMPLE TO THE CHIC DNA REPOSITORY:

**www.ofa.org/about/dna-repository**

Dr. OES

