

Neonatal Ataxia on the Coton de Tulear breed

A neurological hereditary disease preventable thanks to a DNA test

Neonatal ataxia leads to a Nervous system degeneration. About 10% of Coton de Tulear are carriers of the genetic mutation responsible for the disease. A reliable DNA test can screen stud dogs and brood bitches, in order to adapt matings and avoid birth of affected puppies, and spread of the disease in the breed.

An incapacitating hereditary disease

Neonatal ataxia leads to a nervous system degeneration. First symptoms like balance disorders, and incapacity to coordinate movements are visible from birth. Puppies unable to stand or to move must be euthanised.

A fairly common disease

About 10% of Coton de Tulear in Europe are carrying of the mutation responsible of neonatal ataxia. A breeder can mate without noticing a male « carrier » and a female « carrier » and produce a litter containing affected puppies.

A dog « carrier » of the mutation will not develop the disease but transmits it to 50% of the puppies. A stallion « carrier » of the mutation which is used a lot for reproduction, spreads the disease through the breed and helps to increase the frequency of the mutation and multiply the number of affected dogs.

A preventable disease

An affected puppy inherited the mutation from his two parents. Breeders unaware of Neonatal Ataxia can mate stud dogs and brood bitches carriers of the mutation and produce affected puppies. A DNA test called BNAT (Bandera's Neonatal Ataxia), can detect the Neonatal Ataxia with a reliability above 99%

Avoid the birth of affected puppies

In order to secure its kennel and avoid the risk of production affected puppies, the breeder must screen its breeding dogs thanks to the BNAT DNA test. When acquiring a puppy for breeding or when a stud dog is used for a mating, the breeder verifies the genetic status of the dog for Bandera's Neonatal Ataxia, asking for the result of a the BNAT DNA test.

A DNA test easy to perform

The veterinarian performs a simple cheek swab and sends it to the laboratory. The result, delivered within few days, indicates if the tested dog is clear, carrier or affected for Bandera's Neonatal Ataxia. A genetic certificate displaying the result must be used as a guarantee for a mating or to justify the sale of puppies clear of Bandera's Neonatal Ataxia.

The veterinarian who notices early neurological issues in a young Coton de Tulear can process a DNA test to confirm or refute the diagnosis of Bandera's Neonatal Ataxia. If the dog is affected, parents have to be screened.

A breeder who knows the genetic status of the dog can select its breeding dogs, adapt matings, avoid the birth of affected puppies and limit the spread of this neurological disease in the breed.

Dr Guillaume QUENEY
ANTAGENE