

Information for Veterinary Surgeons

This information sheet has been produced for new owners of Clumber Spaniels to share with their Vets. Clumber Spaniels are a numerically small breed and many Vets will not have encountered one before. There are a number of preconceptions about the breed's health that are considered out dated and it is hoped that this information will assist in the care of this new owners' companion.

As with all dogs it does not come with a guarantee of a life free of problems. Clumbers are a gentle, stoic breed; this may lead to them not displaying the level of pain or discomfort that they are experiencing. Their calm, accepting nature makes them good patients. Breeders aim to sell puppies in good health, but should you find something that could be potentially hereditary then please ask for the breeder to be informed along with as much detail as possible.

The Clumber Spaniel is the largest of the Spaniel breeds; the breed standard gives a weight of 29.5 – 34kgs for dogs and 25 – 29.5kgs for bitches; it is generally a well boned breed. However there is variability of size within the breed and a Body Condition Score should be used to establish if the weight is correct for the dog.

Clumber Spaniels may suffer from conditions that are common to many breeds. The following is a list of conditions that may be encountered:

Ear Problems	Ears should be routinely cleaned and excess hair underneath the ear flap removed. This will minimise the occurrence of ear infections. Clumbers that suffer from recurrent ear infections should be evaluated for possible food hypersensitivities.
Eyes	Some Clumbers will suffer from "tear staining" and this can usually be resolved by regular cleaning. In the past the Clumber eyelids were often 'v' or diamond shaped however there has been much improvement with eye health. Entropion may occur, but minor deviations of the lids should only require monitoring until the head has fully matured at about 2 – 3 years of age. Ectropion may also be seen, but this is usually related to the shape of the Clumber eye which is looser than is seen in most other breeds. Clumbers may have some loose skin on their heads and faces. With age some dogs develop dry eye. The Clumber Spaniel Club is currently monitoring eye health through annual eye testing clinics and the collation of eye test results.
Anal Glands	Impacted anal glands can be problematic but a change of diet usually improves matters.
Skin	Itchy skin problems are often resolved by a change of diet. Hypothyroidism has been reported in Clumber Spaniels.

Panosteitis	Panosteitis is the most common cause of lameness in a growing Clumber where there is no evidence of injury. This usually resolves itself once bone growth is complete.
Intervertebral Disc Disease	Disc disease is usually seen in the middle aged dog due to the disc rupturing after much wear and tear. Some cases respond well to medical treatment aimed at reducing the inflammation and swelling around the disc. Those with recurrent pain may require spinal surgery to remove the affected disc.
Hip Dysplasia	Radiographs of a Clumber's hips may be not good, but what would be crippling in another breed usually causes little or no problem in the Clumber. Hip health has improved significantly in the last decade.
Exercise Induced Collapse (EIC)	EIC has been identified in Clumber Spaniels and has been found to have a high level of incidence within the breed. It causes affected dogs to have profound exercise intolerance, although not all affected dogs will show symptoms. It is a simple recessive gene trait, and a DNA test is available. This will determine whether the dog is "affected", "carrier" or "clear" of the disease. Those found to be "affected" or "carrier" must only be mated with "clear" status dogs.
Pyruvate Dehydrogenase Phosphatase 1 Deficiency (PDP1)	PDP1 is a rare condition in Clumbers. Clumbers that are affected have profound exercise intolerance with a fatal outcome usually before the dog reaches 3 months of age. It is a simple recessive gene trait, and a DNA test is available. This will determine whether the dog is "affected", "carrier" or "clear" of the disease. A "carrier" must only be mated with "clear" status dogs.

Breeding

The Clumber Spaniel is a Vulnerable British Breed and has a very small gene pool therefore owners should consider allowing their Clumbers to mature and, subject to satisfactory health screening, be used for breeding prior to being neutered.

Although Clumber bitches usually have their first season around 9 months old, it is quite common for them not to have it until 12 to 14 months old, and this should not give reason for any concern. Many Clumbers are natural whelpers; the most frequently encountered problem is uterine inertia which may necessitate a caesarean section.

The Clumber Spaniel Club recommends that all Clumber Spaniels should be health tested prior to being bred and an up to date list of recommended tests may be found on the Clumber Spaniel Club's website.

Currently the following screening tests should be carried out:

BVA Hip Dysplasia; BVA/ KC/ ISDS Eye Testing and DNA testing for Exercise Induced Collapse (EIC) & Pyruvate Dehydrogenase Phosphatase 1 Deficiency (PDP1).

Further details about health & welfare can be found on the Clumber website at www.clumberspanielclub.org.uk