



The Golden Retriever Club of America, Inc.

The CHIC DNA Repository



Golden Retrievers were the pilot breed for the Canine Health Information Center (CHIC) DNA Repository (<http://www.caninehealthinfo.org/dnabank.htm>). The Golden Retriever community responded to the pilot program in 2005 and in subsequent years with enormous enthusiasm and the CHIC DNA Repository is now a well-established and important research resource, with over 3000 Golden Retriever samples banked (as of 2012). This Repository, in combination with the mapping of the canine genome, is expected to have a significant impact on research activities regarding canine genetic disease.

The DNA Repository will serve the canine research community by providing researchers with optimized family groups needed for specific research studies, and will facilitate more rapid progress in research by expediting the sample collection process. Researchers funded by such organizations as the Canine Health Foundation and Morris Animal Foundation can apply to use this DNA for specific studies, and each sample can be used for multiple carefully reviewed research studies without requiring repeated blood draws. Above all, participants in the DNA Repository are on the cutting edge of genetic research, and we sincerely thank each and every owner and dog.

DNA is most useful when the sample is linked both to a health history (including but not limited to phenotypic health “clearances”), and to a pedigree. This provides researchers with the ability to select the samples that are of interest to particular studies by searching the database for dogs that meet specific eligibility criteria. (However, all individual dogs, pedigrees, and owners will be coded for anonymity, which can be waived only by the owner.) It is very important that owners update the health history over the lifetime of the dog, since many health conditions of interest may not have developed at the time the dog was entered into the Repository.

DNA can be collected through either a blood sample or by using buccal (cheek) swabs, but blood samples provide an almost unlimited supply of high quality DNA and are most suitable for research purposes. However, CHIC encourages owners to also obtain buccal swabs from their dog if they may wish to have DNA available for DNA tests developed after the dog's lifetime. These should remain useable for an extended period of time if the owner stores them in a cool, dry place, and are more accessible to the owner than is DNA stored in the CHIC Repository.

Now that the DNA Repository is a reality, we don't want to see enthusiasm and support stop. Many representatives of local Clubs have inquired about having their own blood draw, possibly in conjunction with a Specialty, other dog event, or as a stand-alone project. We strongly encourage member Clubs to plan local DNA blood draws, and arrangements can be made by contacting Dr Mike Lappin at anidoc@comcast.net. The Golden Retriever Foundation supports these blood draw clinics by offering supplies at no charge, and there is also no charge to the owner for submitting blood to the CHIC DNA Repository in conjunction with these clinics.

Dogs can also be included on an individual basis by following instructions in the link below, although there is typically a fee for submitting blood from healthy dogs. However, there is no charge for submitting a blood sample from a dog affected with a health condition important to the breed such as hip or elbow dysplasia, inherited heart disease, inherited eye disease, and cancer, and we strongly encourage owners to submit samples from these dogs. Contact Eddie Dziuk at EDziuk@OFFA.org in advance to have the fee waived.

Your participation in this important Repository will assist health research for decades to come, and we urge everyone to enroll as many dogs as possible to show your support for a healthier future for Golden Retrievers. Additional information about the CHIC DNA Repository may be found at <http://www.caninehealthinfo.org/dnabank.html>.

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