
Addison's disease

The pituitary gland produces a hormone that triggers the adrenal gland to produce corticosteroids. If there is a problem with the adrenal gland, or a pituitary tumor, the process breaks down and not enough corticosteroids are produced. Characterized by weakness, weight loss, anorexia, and fatigue.

alopecic syndrome, color dilution alopecia

deficiency of the hair, caused by a failure to grow or regrow after loss. Signs may include bacterial folliculitis, scaling and hair loss. Caused by the dilution gene at the D locus.

allergy

immunological hypersensitivity to certain foreign antigens

anemia

reduction of red blood cells or hemoglobin. The red cells contain the protein 'hemoglobin' which binds oxygen in the red blood cell. This allows the transport of oxygen from the lungs to the tissues. Symptoms include weakness, reluctance to exercise, pale mucus membranes, and tachycardia (abnormally rapid heart rate).

terms for anatomical orientation

The physical structure of the body. Understanding the words used to express positioning on a dog's body helps a great deal in understanding veterinary lingo. For the directions below, the dog is standing in the center of a room with his head facing the north wall.

On the body:

Dorsal - toward the ceiling or back

Ventral - toward the floor or belly

Cranial, or anterior - toward the north wall or head

Caudal, or posterior - toward the south wall or butt

Lateral - toward the east or west wall or side

Medial - toward the midline, away from the east or west walls

On the limbs:

Proximal - toward the body

Distal - away from the body

Palmar - the front foot pads

Plantar - the rear foot pads

Movement:

Flexion - decreasing a joint's angle

Extension - increasing a joint's angle

antibody

proteins produced by the immune system in response to antigens; an important component of the immune system

antigen

a foreign substance that stimulates an immune response

arthritis

inflammation of a joint caused by abnormal stress on a normal joint, or by normal stress on an abnormal joint. Polyarthritis is immune mediated, and is arthritis in multiple joints. osteoarthritis

autoimmune disease	failure of the immune system to differentiate the body's own cells from foreign substances, triggering an inflammatory response against self. This can be in the form of a very specific immune attack, such as the destruction of pancreatic islet cells resulting in diabetes mellitus, or a broad immunologic injury such as lupus.
autoimmune hemolytic anemia	the body produces antibodies directed against its own red blood cells, causing their destruction. FYI: Many if not all of the autoimmune anemias have antibodies that attack related, similar blood types, donor RBC's too.
autosomal	any of the chromosomes other than the sex pair, the 'X' or 'Y' chromosomes
benign	not cancerous or malignant
calcinosis circumscripta	deposits of calcium found in small lumps under the skin, in the tongue, or attached to tendons or in joint capsules
cancer	a group of diseases caused by transformation of normal cells into malignant ones. When these cells shed and travel to other areas of the body, the cancer is said to metastasize. As the cancerous growth draws nutrients, and the general lack of well-being diminishes the appetite, the resultant emaciation is called cancer cachexia.
cataracts	loss of transparency of the lens of the eye Can be genetic or acquired as the result of injury or diabetes, aging, etc. Also associated with PRA which is inherited. juvenile develops in dogs less than 6 months old punctate small points
cerebellar degeneration	degeneration of the cerebellar portion of the brain
cervical vertebral instability (wobblers)	compression of the cervical (neck) spinal cord caused by instability or malformation of the cervical vertebrae. Dogs show lack of muscle coordination in the back legs and possibly neck.
cleft palate	a congenital split involving the hard or soft palate in the mouth. May cause nasal regurgitation in newborns. Known to be inherited in some breeds, may also be caused by environmental factors.
congenital	present at birth. May or may not be inherited from parents and may or may not be passed on to off-spring.
cruciate	shaped like a cross. Cruciate ligaments are found on the front (cranial or anterior) and the back (caudal or posterior) of the stifle (?knee?) joint.
cryptorchid	an animal with one or two undescended testicles.
Cushing's disease	the pituitary gland produces a hormone that triggers the adrenal gland to produce corticosteroids. If there is a problem with the adrenal gland, or a pituitary tumor, the process breaks down and too much corticosteroids are produced.

cutaneous	benign proliferation of nodules in or under the skin
cystitis	inflammation of the urinary bladder.
cyst	a closed sac of fluid or semi-solid substance. Generally harmless, but in some cases they may become malignant.
demodectic mange	skin disease characterized by hair loss particularly on the head, face, neck, shoulders and the front of the forelegs. Caused by the demodex mite which is normally found on the skin of most dogs, but due to an abnormality of the immune system, the body overreacts to its presence. It can be treated, but it is occasionally resistant to treatment.
Diabetes insipidus	inadequate secretion of, or resistance to the effects of, antidiuretic hormone (ADH or Vasopressin). This hormone stimulates the kidney to retain water in the body. Consequently, the dog passes a large volume of urine with a low specific gravity, and also exhibits great thirst. It may be acquired, inherited, or idiopathic. mellitus - due to a failure of the pancreas to produce sufficient insulin, or the cells resistance to the effects of insulin the body is unable to properly process glucose. May require insulin injections, or may be controlled with diet. May be acquired or possibly inherited.
dominant	only one copy of a gene is necessary for a trait to be exhibited. At least one of the parents would also exhibit this same trait.
dysfibrinogenemia, factor I deficiency	fibrinogen, or Factor I, is an important component of the "clotting cascade" which allows your body to stop bleeding. This disease is due to either an abnormally low amount of fibrinogen, or its complete absence, or the presence of a normal amount of an abnormal and less effective fibrinogen. Symptoms include easy or excessive bleeding or no symptoms at all.
dysplasia	bad (dys) + growth (plasia)
ectopic cilia	hairs on the inside of the eyelids causing irritation to the eye.
ectropion	eyelid turns outward. Allows for the accumulation of foreign matter causing eye irritation.
elbow dysplasia, ED	<u>asynchronous growth of the bones of the foreleg causing the joint to meet improperly. elbow dysplasia</u>
entropion	eyelids turn inward causing hair to irritate the surface of the eye. Normally requires surgical correction, and sometimes requires multiple surgeries.
epilepsy	abnormal electrical function of the brain causing disturbances of the nervous system.
epilepsy (acquired)	Acquired due to injury to the brain at birth, tumor, blow to the head, endocrine (hormonal) disorder, etc.
epilepsy (idiopathic)	no demonstrable cause, may be genetic
fading puppy syndrome	an apparently normal puppy gradually weakens and dies within a week or two of birth. Not a specific disorder, but generally applied to infectious causes.

fibrosarcoma	a malignant tumor arising from collagen-producing fibroblasts (an immature fiber-producing cell of connective tissue).
fly-snapping	repeated snapping at non-existent flying object has been associated in BMDs with partial seizures, in some cases with ear infections, and in a few cases with food allergies. Some forms may be alleviated by seizure medications. A few have been alleviated with behavioral modification techniques, which may indicate that some forms are simply behavioral problems often caused by boredom.
fragmented coronoid process, FCP	the coronoid process fragments forming a loose body in the elbow joint, called a joint mouse. See elbow dysplasia.
gastric dilatation-volvulus, bloat	Gastric dilatation means stomach distention or enlargement, caused by expanding gas. This may or may not be accompanied by volvulus, or torsion, or twisting of the stomach on its long axis. bloat
glomerulonephritis	Inflammatory disease of the glomerulus, part of the kidney, which filters toxic waste from the blood. Tests of the urine can show a variety of abnormalities. Complete loss of kidney function can occur.
gulps	exaggerated swallowing movements. In BMDs, it often is accompanied by a desperate need to eat anything, especially grass.
hemangiosarcoma	a malignant tumor of endothelial cells - the layer of cells that lines the cavities of the heart and of the blood and lymph vessels. (Epithelial cells cover all body surfaces, inside and out.)
hematoma	localized collection of blood, a lump. Dogs can get them in their ear flaps from violent and repeated shaking of the head, from such things as ear infections or insect stings.
hemophilia	the blood lacks coagulating factors, causing a strong tendency to bleed, and difficulty in getting the bleeding to stop.
hepatitis	inflammation of the liver. This can result from a variety of causes including infections (particularly viral), drugs, autoimmunity and genetics. The liver stores and filters blood, secretes bile, converts sugars, processes fat, produces proteins which help to control blood volume, and produces some of the clotting factors.
hepatocerebellar degeneration	death of liver cells causing poisoning of the white matter of the brain.
hernia	abnormal protrusion of organs through a weak spot or abnormal opening, usually in the abdominal or groin areas.
hip dysplasia, CHD, HD	improper development of the hip joint, typically, the acetabulum (socket) is not deep enough for the femoral head (ball) to fit fully into place.
histiocytomas	a small wart-like skin growth that will eventually disappear. (Note: NO growths or lumps on a BMD should ever be ignored! Your vet can do a needle aspirate on most lumps to help rule out cancer.)

histiocytosis	abnormal appearance of histiocytes in the blood. (Histiocytes are produced by the bone marrow and are normally immobile until stimulated by inflammation. They are a type of antigen presenting cell.)
histiocytosis (malignant)	a rapidly invasive proliferation of neoplastic (new growth) histiocytes. No known treatment, always fatal.
histiocytosis (systemic)	proliferation of histiocytes invading the skin and lymph nodes. Can go into remission for years, or progress to the malignant form. Can be treated, but not cured.
Horner's Syndrome	is a group of signs that occurs when specific muscles of the face lose their stimulation by certain nerves, specifically the sympathetic nerves. Signs of Horner's syndrome may include constricted pupil, elevation of the third eyelid, retraction of the eyeball into the head, slight drooping of the eyelid, and an increased pink color and warmth of the nose and ear on the affected side. May be immune mediated.
hot spots	inflammation of the skin, dermatitis. Frequently caused by flea bites, or a hypersensitivity to an allergen. It can also be caused by bacteria building up in an area that the dog bites or scratches. Some BMD owners have linked it to the dog having wet fur for prolonged periods of time.
hydrocephalus, water on the brain	accumulation of cerebrospinal fluid in the skull, which diminishes the size of the brain.
hyper	increased
hypertrophic osteodystrophy, HOD	<u>inflammation of the growth plates, and can be accompanied by depression, weight loss, and fever. The joints may be swollen and feel hot. Mild cases usually resolve with no lasting ill effects. However, in the rare case of severe HOD, permanent damage to the bone joints can result in limb deformities. hypertrophic osteodystrophy</u>
hypo	decreased
hypomyelination, tremblers	reduction in the amount of myelin (cover or sheath) on the nerves. The disease has an early onset, in BMDs is considered to be an autosomal recessive trait.
idiopathic	no known cause
incontinence	inability to control urination and/or defecation.
intervertebral disk disease, IVDD	pain and often paralysis resulting from displacement of the center of a vertebral disk
intussuception	the intestine telescopes on itself, causing a blockage
irritable bowel syndrome	soft or watery feces, often with mucus. Associated with stress. Also called colitis.
lateral torsion	twisted or rotated out
leukemia	a cancerous proliferation of one of the subsets of White Blood Cells
luxating tarsus	dislocation of the 'ankle'

lymphoma, lymphosarcoma	malignant tumor that arises from cells of the lymphoreticular system. Commonly presents with swollen lymph nodes, masses, enlarged liver or spleen, fevers, weight loss.
malignant	tending to become progressively worse and result in death
mastitis	inflammation of the mammary gland, usually due to bacterial infection.
mastocytoma, mast cell tumors	a growth of mast cells (cells in the dermis which is directly beneath the outer skin layer, which release histamine to counter allergens). These tumors may become malignant. (Note: in BMDs, determine status, may be malignant!) mast cell
megaesophagus	overly enlarged esophagus causing buildup of food and saliva and regurgitation. Associated with aspirative pneumonia from an early age.
meningitis	not a disease, but a symptom, the inflammation of the membranes covering the brain and spinal cord, the meninges. This can be caused by bacteria, virus, fungi, or chemical toxins.
meningitis (aseptic)	an inflammation of the meninges for which no identifiable infectious agent can be cultured or tested for, and may be genetic.
mitral valve defect	a defect in the heart valve that separates the left atrium and the left ventricle.
murmur	an abnormal heart sound associated with the opening or closing of a heart valve. This may indicate a structural or functional abnormality.
optic nerve hypoplasia	incomplete development of the optic nerve.
osteochondritis dessicans, OCD	a piece of cartilage tears away forming a flap. The flap may reattach to the bone on its own, or it may tear away, becoming a joint mouse in the joint cavity. Symptoms include pain and limping. Often requires surgery. osteochondritis dessicans
pain, chronic	persisting for a long time
pancreatitis	inflammation of the pancreas due to a variety of causes such as infections and drugs. The pancreas produces enzymes and bicarbonate, important in digestion and absorption of nutrients, as well as insulin. Chronic, severe pancreatitis can result in malabsorption and diarrhea as well as diabetes mellitus.
panosteitis, pano	inflammation of the bone, particularly the long bones in growing dogs. Causes pain and limping. panosteitis
patellar luxation	dislocation of the 'knee' cap, causing mild to severe, continuous or intermittent pain
patent ductus arteriosus, PDA	the normal opening between the aorta and pulmonary artery, which allows blood to bypass the unoxygenated lung in utero, fails to close after birth.

pemphigus foliaceus	a generalized scaling disease, with hair loss, and sometimes with the formation of heavy crusts. Involvement of a nail bed leads to loss of the nail.
pica	chronic eating of non-food materials.
pituitary gland	a hormone secreting (endocrine) gland at the base of the brain; it regulates growth as well as regulating the proper functioning of many other glands and processes.
plasia	growth
polyarteritis nodosa	an inflammatory disease of small and medium sized arteries.
portosystemic shunt, PSS	abnormal blood vessels in the liver preventing normal circulation and functioning of the liver.
progressive retinal atrophy, PRA	any of a number of inherited diseases of the eye leading to blindness. It generally starts with difficulty seeing in the dark followed by a loss of vision in the daylight. In the BMD it is an autosomal recessive trait.
prostatitis	inflammation of the prostate gland.
pyoderma	any purulent (containing or forming pus) skin disease
pyometra	pus accumulation in the uterus, normally caused by bacterial infection.
recessive (mode of inheritance)	requires a copy of the gene from both parents to exhibit the trait. Having only one copy of the gene makes the dog a carrier of the trait, and he will never exhibit the trait - unless the gene is located on the 'X' or sex chromosome.
registry	<p>A database of health information. See ► Health, registries, databases (PDF)</p> <p>Berner-Garde Bernese Mountain Dog data repository used to track health trends and provides reports about a dog's family on request. Independent foundation, not part of the BMDCA.</p> <p>OFA Orthopedic Foundation for Animals, closed registry of hip, elbow, heart, thyroid, and other results.</p> <p>GDC Institute for Genetic Disease Control, (Note: Historical data from the GDC is being maintained by the OFA.) open registry reporting orthopedic and ophthalmologic evaluation reports, tumor, epilepsy, heart registry and some other breed specific health information.</p> <p>PennHIP Penn Hip Improvement Program - closed registry of hip laxity measurements. Uses a DI (distraction index), a number from 0.0 - 1.00 with the lower the number the better the hip.</p> <p>CERF Canine Eye Registry Foundation - closed registry of eye test results.</p>
registry (open registry)	repository of health test results, allows full access to the information.
registry (closed registry)	repository of health test results, limited access, and/or allows access to normal results information only.
sarcoma	tumor formed of connective tissue cells: bone cartilage, muscle, blood vessel, or lymphoid tissue.

sarcoptic mange	skin disease characterized by extreme itching, hair loss, and secondary infection. Usually widespread, but often seen on the belly and inner thighs. Can be treated, but spreads easily.
sebaceous adenitis	inflammation of the sebaceous glands (found at the base of hair follicles).
seborrhea	abnormal secretion of the sebaceous glands at the base of hair follicles, causing anything from dandruff to greasy scales and crust.
selective IgM deficiency	a deficiency in the production of the IgM antibody, one of the body's five classes of immunoglobulins, the proteins produced as antibodies to fight infection and toxins.
snow nose	loss of pigmentation on the nose, usually in winter.
spinal myelopathy	disease of the myelin, or covering (sheath) of the spinal nerves (the spinal cord).
staphylococcus, staph	a type of bacteria. Normally found on the skin and upper respiratory tract, but can occasionally cause localized suppurating infection.
stenosis	a narrowing or contraction of an opening.
stenosis (aortic stenosis)	obstruction of the blood flowing from the left ventricle to the aorta.
stenosis (mitral stenosis)	narrowing of the mitral valve that separates the left atrium and the left ventricle.
stenosis (pulmonary artery stenosis)	narrowing of the outflow from the lungs.
stenosis (subaortic stenosis)	narrowing of the aorta just below the semilunar valves. Severity increases with age.
stones	a mass, usually formed from mineral salts, occurring within the hollow organs: kidney, gallbladder, urinary bladder.
systemic lupus erythematosus, SLE	an autoimmune disease in which the immune system sees its own body as foreign matter. Characterized by polyarthritis, hemolytic anemia, skin disease, among many other symptoms.
thrombocytopenic purpura	a disease characterized by the formation of platelet clots in the microcirculation (very small vessels). The exact cause is unclear, but thought to be due to infections, inherited conditions or immunologic abnormalities. It results in bleeding, with a low platelet count, anemia, neurologic symptoms kidney disease, and fever.
thyroid	the largest of the hormone secreting (endocrine) glands located in the neck; it regulates metabolism.
thyroid (hyperthyroid)	excessive production of thyroid hormones, often seen in older dogs, causing excessive thirst, weight loss, increased appetite and restlessness.
thyroid (hypothyroid)	decreased production of thyroxine, causing poor coat, weight gain, mental dullness, fatigue, cold intolerance, and infertility.

tricuspid valve defect	a defect in the heart valve that separates the right atrium and the right ventricle.
ununited anconeal process, UAP	the anconeal process never unites with the ulna, can detach and form a loose body in the joint, called a joint mouse. See elbow dysplasia. See elbow dysplasia.
uveodermatologic syndrome, Vogt-Koyanagi-Harada-like syndrome	depigmentation of the skin and hair, and of the nose, lips, eyelids, footpads and anus. (In humans this disease is believed to be immune-mediated.)
von Willebrand's disease	deficiency of coagulation factor VIII causing prolonged bleeding time. This can be an autosomal dominant trait, but Bernese Mountain Dogs have Type I, which is an autosomal recessive trait.
