

Storage Disease in Lagotto Romagnolo

Storage disease is a severe and lethal neurodegenerative disease found in the Lagotto, and is auto-recessive. It is essential that no affected dogs are bred and carriers must only be bred to a clear. The disorder was recently identified in the Lagotto by researchers at the University of Helsinki and the University of Bern. Here is a portion of a letter posted on the University of Helsinki site (<http://www.koirangeenit.fi/?x103997=272870>):

Dear Lagotto Romagnolo owners,

We have recently identified a gene mutation that causes a neurodegenerative storage disorder in the Lagotto Romagnolo breed. The clinical and genetics studies were performed as a collaboration between researchers and veterinarians at University of Helsinki, Finland and University of Bern, Switzerland. Altogether 1300 Lagotto samples were tested during the study, and 11 % of these were carriers of the storage disease mutation. These results have already been sent to the owners.

Onset of symptoms can appear from 4 months of age to 4 years. This is a progressive disorder. Those dogs affected will deteriorate to the point they will need to be euthanized. While genetic testing is currently only available through the University of Bern, a commercial test is now available through Genoscooper Labs. A responsible breeder always tests for genetic mutations before any planned breeding.