

**YEAR-END APPEAL**

Dear Friends of the Cairn Terrier,

We have exciting news! The research you have supported into Cairn-specific diseases is beginning to yield important results, improving the lives of Cairns for generations to come.

**Ocular Melanosis Breakthrough!**

After 20+ years of work supported by the Foundation, Dr. Simon Petersen-Jones and his team at Michigan State University have identified a DNA marker for the major form of Ocular Melanosis. This significant breakthrough is a testament to your steadfast financial support and patience. Together, by funding Dr. Petersen-Jones' research, we have made an important contribution to the Cairn Terrier breed. Thank you to all who have donated to the Foundation and supported this work over the years.

The marker is now being used to create a DNA test to guide breeding decisions. The team expects the test will be available this winter, initially through MSU. Details will be on our website when available.

But the work is not complete. The marker, while a significant step forward, is not the final answer. The marker predicts an estimated 85% of the cases of OM (that is, it has about a 15% false negative) – and appears in approximately 20% of cases that do not have OM (a 20% false positive).

Thus, the research continues. An important finding in the MSU team's research is that there appears to be two forms of Ocular Melanosis, the second of which is not predicted by the current marker. Finding a marker for this second form is a priority. In addition, the current marker is for changes linked to OM, rather than for the cause of OM. Identifying the causal DNA is key. To address these targets, they urgently need additional samples. *If you have a dog with OM or an unaffected dog over 8 years of age, please go to the Foundation website to learn how you can help further this critically important work.*



**YOU CAN HELP!**

By making an online donation here:  
<https://www.cairnterrierhealth.org/ways-to-give>

By sending a check payable to the Foundation of the CTCA

By making a monthly pledge.

The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization. Your donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

## Nearing the Goal for Renal Dysplasia

Dr. Margret Casal and her team at the University of Pennsylvania believe they are close to finding the gene(s) that cause renal dysplasia. Dr. Casal anticipates that further sequencing studies, performed with sufficient samples from Cairns affected by kidney disease, will be sufficient to pinpoint the causative gene(s) within the next year.

Again, we request your help in obtaining the samples Dr. Casal and her team need. *If you have or know an affected Cairn, please contact the Foundation Chair ([tammy@tammyerickson.com](mailto:tammy@tammyerickson.com) or 617-283-1740); all submissions will be confidential.*

## Feeding Frequency . . . and the Potential for Other Lifestyle Findings

The Dog Aging Project, the largest canine health study in the world, funded by the National Institutes of Health, the AKC Canine Health Foundation and other partners, and strongly endorsed by the Foundation, has begun releasing preliminary findings. For example, based on observational data from 24,238 pet dogs in the United States, the researchers have observed that adult dogs fed once daily have better average cognitive scores and are less likely to have cancer or gastrointestinal, dental/oral, orthopedic, kidney/urinary, and liver/pancreas health conditions than dogs fed more frequently. The Foundation encourages you to provide data for this important on-going work which we expect will continue to provide insights that are beneficial to all Cairn owners. Our goal is to have enough Cairns participating in the study to allow Cairn-specific results to be separated out from the overall findings. To nominate one of your dogs, please go to <https://dogagingproject.org>.

## Future Research

We are actively working with the AKC-CHF to identify other research initiatives aimed at diseases affecting Cairns, including liver shunt. We are also soliciting interest from other short-legged terrier foundations in co-sponsoring research into diseases that affect all our breeds.

## Testing Guidelines and Clinics

The Foundation sponsors clinics to test for a variety of diseases or conditions, with the goal of making health tests available to Cairn owners and breeders at a significantly lower cost than is possible in private veterinary practices.

The current health testing guidelines for Cairn Terriers are available on our website [www.cairnterrierhealth.org](http://www.cairnterrierhealth.org).

## We Need Your Support

We reach out to you, fellow Cairn lovers, to ask for financial support for our ongoing work in funding research and providing health testing at reduced rates.

You may send a check, payable to the Foundation of the CTCA in the enclosed remittance envelope or donate online at: <https://www.cairnterrierhealth.org/ways-to-give>. We encourage you to consider a monthly pledge. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization. Your donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

The day when we will have more tools to help breeders protect Cairn Terriers from hereditary diseases is getting so close. I hope future generations of Cairns will soon benefit from the work we together are doing today.

We appreciate all that you do.

Sincerely,



Tamara J. Erickson, Chair

and the Foundation Trustees:

Cheri Eagleson ~ Mary Beth Havens ~  
Lydia Hutchinson ~ Mary Jane Lakota ~  
Kydee Sheetz ~ Rebecca White ~ Beth Wilder