



American Kennel Club
Health Statement for the Nederlandse Kooikerhondje
Nederlandse Kooikerhondje Club of USA
www.kooikerhondjeusa.org

The Nederlandse Kooikerhondje Club of the United States of America (NKCUSA), the parent club of this Dutch sporting breed, considers the health of our beautiful breed to be of paramount importance. The Kooikerhondje is relatively healthy and long-lived. Given the origination of the Kooikerhondje from a very limited founding population after World War II, it is susceptible to various hereditary conditions. Utilization of responsible breeding practices to promote genetic diversity within the limited gene pool is key. Knowledge of genetic lines of disease within the breed, combined with good breeding practices, facilitates the reduction of serious illnesses. Kooikerhondje breeders and fanciers enjoy a close working relationship with their counterparts abroad and it is vital that health results are shared internationally to facilitate maintaining genetic diversity across the globe.

To promote responsible breeding, NKCUSA's Health and Genetics Committee strongly encourages performing the following health clearance tests prior to breeding. All results must be submitted to the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA). Breeding stock obtaining the following five health tests will be granted CHIC certification through the AKC Canine Health Information Center:

- Blood test for **von Willebrand Disease (vWD)** for carrier status
- Blood test for **hereditary necrotizing myelopathy (ENM)** for carrier status
- Eye (CERF) examination - to assess for **hereditary eye diseases** such as cataracts and distichiasis
- Patella examination - to assess for **patella luxation (PL)**, a significant problem in the breed
- Hip X-rays to assess for **hip dysplasia**. Ideally performed at 2 years of age.

Kooikerhondjes can suffer from diseases for which screening tests do not exist. The incidence and heredity status for these cases are closely monitored and studied by the NKCUSA and international breed clubs. Careful pedigree analysis to determine relative risk should be performed prior to breeding. These diseases include:

- **Polymyositis (PMN)** - a lethal autoimmune condition causing progressive muscle weakness and loss of function. This disease is currently the subject of intensive research. The inheritance of PMN and prevalence of PMN in Kooikerhondjes are concerning but unclear at present time.
- **Renal disorders** (kidney problems) - renal dysplasia and a number of glomerular disease have been observed in Kooikerhondjes. While the mode of inheritance is unknown, the disease tends to exhibit a hereditary pattern within genetic lines.
- **Epilepsy** — the presence of seizures occurring at different ages has been rarely but consistently observed in Kooikerhondjes. Seizures can result from a variety of causes. However idiopathic seizures (those with unknown cause) are assumed to have a partial hereditary component.

Even with application of good breeding practices, the Kooikerhondje can suffer from a variety of canine diseases. Prospective puppy buyers are encouraged to do research which would include checking OFA for health clearances of a puppy's parents and family members. As risk exists in every dog or pedigree, your breeder should be able and willing to discuss health testing and genetic issues.

Our breed club strives to provide education about major health and temperament problems to allow for continued improvement of the breed.

Requests for further information and questions can be directed to the Health and Genetics Committee at health_genetics@kooikerhondjeusa.org.

Approved by the Board of the Kooikerhondje Club of the USA, May 7, 2019.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Nancy P. Melone". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Nancy P. Melone, Ph.D., Chair, Health and Genetics Committee
Board Member, Nederlandse Kooikerhondje Club of the USA