



DEPARTMENT OF POPULATION HEALTH  
AND REPRODUCTION  
(530) 752-1358  
FAX (530) 752-4278

SCHOOL OF VETERINARY MEDICINE  
ONE SHIELDS AVENUE  
DAVIS, CALIFORNIA 95616-8743

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Dear dog breeder,

Researchers in the Bannasch Laboratory at the School of Veterinary Medicine, University of California-Davis are initiating a long term study on canine birth defects (CBD). The birth defects that we are currently targeting are cleft palate, umbilical hernia (requiring surgical correction) and cryptorchidism. As one part of the study, we are interested in determining if puppies are predisposed to birth defects when bitches are exposed to certain environmental factors. In addition, we will also determine genetic causes of these specific birth defects. In order to address these two issues, we need information about the bitches' gestational environment as well as DNA samples from affected and unaffected puppies.

We are asking breeders to use the following link to fill out an online survey about litters born in the last year. In order to fill out this survey, the breeder will need to have the litter registration information and the ability to print. If breeders are willing to send DNA samples, we have instructions at the end of the survey about how to send samples and what types of samples we can accept.

All information obtained is completely confidential.

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/k9birthdefects>

Thank you for your support,

Danika Bannasch DVM PhD

Nili Karmi (combined degree student)

Noa Safra DVM PhD (post-doctoral fellow)

Amy Young (lab Manager)

Department of Population Health and Reproduction  
School of Veterinary Medicine  
(530) 754-8728  
dlbannasch@ucdavis.edu