

Princess Animal Hospital Downtown Animal Hospital

Every Pet. Every Client. Every Family. Every Time.

BREED PREDISPOSITIONS TO DISEASE IN ADULT SCHNAUZER CROSSES

Many disease problems are genetic or inherited. Certain breeds are at risk for certain diseases. This doesn't mean that just because your dog belongs to a certain breed he will always develop these problems – it just means that he's more at risk than the average dog. It also doesn't mean that these are the only diseases your pet could get – life is not that simple. It does, however, help to guide the medical care your pet needs.

Just as some genetically related diseases in humans don't begin to cause problems until later in life – heart disease or breast cancer, for example – many genetic diseases in dogs appear late in life. Some of these can be tested for, enabling earlier diagnosis and intervention. Some simply require awareness on the part of the owner as to what to watch for and when to call the veterinarian. We try to make sure that every owner of an at-risk breed knows about the diseases and problems that could affect their dog.

ADULT

Periodontal Disease: Dental disease is the most common chronic problem in pets, with 80% of cats and dogs being affected. The health of your pet's teeth is directly related to the length and quality of your pet's life. Your pet's oral health affects all body systems. When the teeth become covered in plaque and tartar, bacteria take up residence in this plaque and pockets of bacteria begin to form under the gums damaging ligaments that hold the teeth in place. Any pocket formation under the gum line is painful. The bacteria in these pockets enter the blood stream and travel to organs such as the heart, lungs, liver, spleen and kidney causing premature damage to these organs. A healthy mouth will add one to three years of life expectancy for your pet!

Recommendations: Have your dog's teeth professionally examined once per year. Home care, including tooth brushing, oral gel or T/D diet can help immensely.

Atopy: Allergy to inhaled and topical substances such as pollens, mold & mildew spores or dust mites. Instead of the hay fever symptoms humans get from inhalent allergies, dogs usually get itchy – itchy face, feet & ears being the most common locations, though some dogs are itchy all over from their allergies. Symptoms typically start between the ages of 2 and 5 years. They tend to gradually get worse & last longer every year. Allergies to dust mites, molds & mildews can be year round problems.

Recommendation: If you notice symptoms, call us. There are many treatment options available for this very common condition.

Bladder Stones: There are different types of stones that can form in the bladder, and certain breeds of dogs are prone to certain types of stones with schnauzer crosses being prone to ammonium urate stones. Symptoms of bladder stones include blood in the urine, straining to urinate or inability to urinate if the urethra is blocked with small stones or crystals. Surgical removal is the preferred treatment for all bladder stones. We can obtain a definitive diagnosis when the stones have been removed and sent for analysis.

Recommendation: Pets that develop bladder stones do so because they are genetically predisposed to develop them. This means that they are at risk for their lifetime. The key to prevention is dietary management and regular monitoring for the life of the pet. We recommend a complete analysis of your pet's urine bi-annually or immediately if they develop symptoms. An abdominal x-ray or ultrasound will confirm the presence of this type of stone in the bladder.

Diabetes is common in Schnauzer crosses. It usually develops in mid-life, between 3 and 10 years of age. Signs include drinking & urinating much more than normal, and weight loss despite a good appetite. If you notice your dog drinking more water, call us right away. This is one of the most common symptoms of illness in dogs, yet one frequently ignored by pet owners.

Recommendation: Annual blood and urine screening, sooner if symptoms are present. Weight control is very important to prevent and control diabetes.

Digestive disorders: There are several inherited conditions or tendencies that can cause recurrent or chronic vomiting, diarrhea or weight loss/anorexia in dogs. Schnauzer crosses are susceptible to pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas); which is a very painful condition.

Recommendation: To help prevent symptoms, feed the type of food that your health care team recommends. Most importantly, avoid snacks and table food, as treats high in fat can cause pancreatitis. For example, pig ears contain about 800 fat calories each and are a common trigger for pancreatitis.

Food allergies: Food allergy is an inherited problem that can start at any age but is most common in young adult dogs. Symptoms may involve the skin (itching, recurrent ear infections), the GI tract (chronic vomiting or diarrhea) or occasionally seizures and other disorders. Special diets can relieve symptoms.

Recommendations: Keep your dog's diet consistent. The more things you feed him, the more food items he will have the opportunity to become allergic to. If food allergy is suspected your veterinarian will start your pet on a prescription hypoallergenic diet, which is the best way to both diagnose and treat the disorder.

Hyperlipidemia: Schnauzer crosses tend to have a lot of fat, or lipid, in their bloodstream. Lipidosis makes the blood serum very cloudy, which can interfere with many blood tests. Some of the signs you may see are abdominal discomfort, vomiting, diarrhea or even seizures. Enlargement of internal organs such as liver and spleen can occur and require xray or ultrasound to diagnose.

Recommendation: Before drawing blood in this breed it is helpful for the dog to have been fasted for at least twelve hours. This minimizes the amount of lipid in the blood sample. Feeding an appropriate low fat diet recommended by your veterinarian can also help reduce the amount of circulating lipids. Avoid feeding our dog table foods and treats that are high in fat.

Otitis: Schnauzer crosses grow a lot of hair in their ears which can trap in moisture and cause an infection. Signs of ear infection include scratching the ears, shaking the head or pain when the ears are rubbed. There may be a foul smell from the ear and it may be red and sore. Ear infections are very painful and require attention.

Recommendations: If your pet has recurrent ear infections we need to identify any underlying causes and treat for these in order to have success. Swimmers need regular cleaning.

Portosystemic shunt: In this disorder some of the blood supply that should go to the liver goes around it instead, depriving the liver of the blood flow it needs to grow and function. A small, poorly nourished liver cannot remove toxins from the bloodstream properly, leading to the build-up of these toxic waste materials, such as ammonia and bile acids, in the bloodstream. Affected animals have trouble handling drugs and anesthetics, and in severe cases high blood ammonia levels cause neurological signs.

Recommendation: Liver testing in addition to a standard wellness panel. Blood testing and a liver ultrasound scan are done if symptoms develop. If a shunt is suspected the bladder should be ultrasounded as well. The same breeds prone to liver shunts are prone to ammonium urate bladder stones.

Renal dysplasia: This is a genetic form of kidney disease. Affected pets may show kidney failure at an early age. Signs include excessive urine production and water drinking; poor appetite or weight loss; and eventually vomiting and diarrhea. Blood testing and/or urine testing may be used to diagnose kidney disease. An ultrasound of the kidneys will identify structural changes in the kidney that are consistent with renal dysplasia.

Recommendation: blood and urine screening tests as recommended. Many times renal dysplasia is diagnosed on pre-anesthetic blood testing on apparently healthy young pets before spaying, neutering or dentistry. This disease is one of the primary reasons we recommend such testing.

Sick Sinus Syndrome: The sinus node is the part of the electrical system of the heart that signals the heart to contract, or beat. If the sinus node isn't working properly, the dog will have a very low heart rate and may faint with exercise or stress. The disease usually becomes a problem in young or middle aged Schnauzer crosses. Mild cases can be treated medically; severe ones require a pacemaker implant. Usually used human pacemakers are refurbished for dogs to reduce the cost.

Recommendation: ECG screening should be performed at least annually for susceptible breeds of dogs, and before any anesthetic procedure.

RISK	ACTION	Time
Atopy	Monitor for symptoms	
Bladder stones	Bi-annual urine testing, and a diet recommended by your pet's health care team.	
Diabetes	Weight control and annual blood and urine testing	
Digestive disorders	Feed a diet recommended by your pet's health care team. Avoid table food and high fat snacks	

Food allergy	Avoid switching foods, and feed a diet recommended by your pet's health care team.	
Hyper lipidemia	Feed and a diet recommended by your pet's health care team and avoid fatty snacks, and annual blood testing	
Otitis	Use veterinary ear cleaner as needed	
Periodontal disease	Brush teeth and have professionally examined and cleaned once a year to prevent irreversible damage from infection.	
Portosystemic shunt	Annual blood and urine testing	
Renal dysplasia	Annual blood and urine testing	
Sick Sinus Syndrome	Annual ECG	

Compassionate – as we tend to your pet’s needs.

Committed – to offering the best care for your pet.

Creative – in our use of new technology.

Connected – to our team, to our community and to the leaders in our industry.

Clean – Our hospital will be spotless and odor free.

