

To the members of the Miniature Schnauzer community

It is with overwhelming joy that the AMSC Health Committee announces that we have been able to successfully support Dr Giger's research on MAC with the AMSC membership funds. Based upon Dr Giger's recent update we are at the very last and most important stage of rolling out a DNA test for MAC very soon. The DNA test will identify not only sick Miniature schnauzers, but also young dogs predicted to develop MAC and those carriers for MAC – it is an autosomal recessive trait and carriers remain asymptomatic but pass on the diseased/mutant gene.

The AMSC Health Committee, on behalf of Dr Giger and team, is asking, in fact pleading, that if anyone has a dog currently alive with Mycobacteria avium to PLEASE contact Dr Giger directly (giger@vet.upenn.edu 215-898-8830) or the Health Committee (cell: 404-401-1173 or email: AMSCEALTHGROUP@yahoogroups.com) as soon as possible.

Dr Giger needs freshly collected and overnight shipped small blood samples from affected (and normal) Miniature Schnauzers to test regarding immune function against MAC. This may also provide insight into any potential treatment options as current therapies have failed.

Ideally, if we can get these samples to Dr Giger as quickly as possible we will be able to start the process of testing for this fatal disease. Those individuals who contact us with affected dogs and willing to send to Dr Giger now will have their DNA testing done for free. We cannot stress enough that samples from "affected" dogs are urgently needed to verify the accuracy of DNA test that Dr Giger and his team have developed.

Soon we can begin the process to have Miniature Schnauzers from the US and Canada and elsewhere tested. We have little doubt from what we know that this test will identify MAC carriers and affecteds' and clears' and, at Dr Giger's direction, we are hard at work developing a priority for testing so as not to overwhelm Dr Giger's lab.

Updatet his call for affected cases must be disseminated & distributed as widely as possible. Once we get the word from Dr Giger we can start using it for our breed. Additional information will be coming out shortly as to how this will be accomplished breed-wide. It is likely that the first open testing call will be made to US and Canadian AMSC members and international AMSC members with Newsprint or Future Shock in the pedigree preferentially but this will be strictly defined to ensure fairness and reason. Sterile Cheek/Brush swabs will be provided by the AMSC and for this final testing phase, plea se contact the Health Committee at 404-401-1173 or email: AMSCEALTHGROUP@yahoogroups.com.

AMSC HEALTH COMMITTEE