

Healthy eyes - for a lifetime of active companionship

Wherever possible, we should try to minimise the chances of passing on painful or vision-threatening eye conditions from one generation to the next. Most canine eye diseases are known to be inherited, so the least we can do is to try to ensure that the dog and bitch to be mated have current eye certificates showing them to be unaffected. This does not guarantee freedom from a hidden carrier status where a condition is known to be recessively inherited, but does go a long way towards reducing the chances of persistent discomfort or vision loss.



Further information

The **ACES Rules and Procedures** sets out the regulations governing the operation of the eye scheme. The **ACES Information for Owners** document provides all the necessary information for any breed in which there is known or suspected inherited eye disease. Copies of these Guides and further owner advice on how to use ACES (including the process for lodging an appeal against a Panelist findings) can be obtained from:



The Australian Veterinary Association
Unit 40, 2A Herbert Street
ST LEONARDS NSW 2065
Ph: (02) 9431 5000
www.ava.com.au/aces



Or the Canine Control offices in each State or Territory
For further details see the web address:
<http://www.ankc.aust.com/>

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Australian Canine Eye Scheme (ACES)

A GUIDE TO OWNERS

- » A national assessment system for registered dog breeds, offering qualified certification for a range of congenital and inherited eye conditions.
- » Eye assessments carried out by registered veterinary eye specialists.
- » Administered by the Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) to national quality assurance standards.
- » Endorsed by the Australian National Kennel Council (ANKC) as a reliable screening service, valuable to dog breeders and new owners.

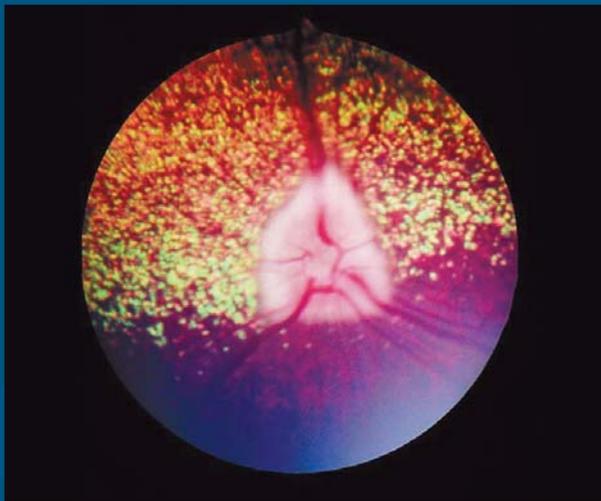


*Make a better breeding decision
– for healthy eyes and vision*

Why do we need a national eye scheme?

The AVA/ANKC Australian Canine Eye Scheme (ACES) is available to breed clubs or individual owners who wish to screen for eye diseases. Regular ACES certification will help breeders plan mating programs and reassure other breeders and new owners about the soundness of their current stock.

It also offers a means by which breeders of valuable pedigree pups can have whole litters checked by a qualified eye specialist at 6-10 weeks, to confirm normal eye development before sale, in the event of a later buyer dispute.



An ACES exam screens for a range of eye diseases including those involving the eyelids, tear ducts and surrounding structures, but records only those conditions affecting the eyeball (cornea, iris, ciliary body, lens, vitreous, retina and optic nerve). Examination procedures are prescribed by the ACVSc Ophthalmology Chapter to international standards.

How are defects monitored?

For a given eye condition, affected breeds will be listed as either Schedule 1 or Schedule 2.

Schedule 1 includes those breeds in which there is a known tendency for inherited defects. Where defects are found, results will be sent to the ANKC to be recorded on a canine inherited diseases database.

Schedule 2 lists breeds in which a few affected cases may have been seen in Australia or overseas, but the true prevalence remains uncertain and any tendency for inherited defects is still under investigation. The benefit of the Schedule 2 list is that it alerts breeders to potential problems as they arise.

Statistics will be compiled for all breeds but ANKC National Breed Councils will choose whether or not to make individual results freely available, by designating their breed as either Open Register or Closed Register. ANKC or the Canine Controls in each State are authorised to release ACES results for any dog examined in an Open Register breed, in periodically published lists or by phone or web access provided full registration details are quoted.



How do I arrange to have my dogs tested?

In breeds susceptible to early onset eye disease, it is best to test all pups in the litter between 6 and 10 weeks of age. There is a separate ACES Litter Assessment form for this purpose. For most known eye conditions, the best age for the initial adult eye test is generally considered to be before they reach one year of age. ACES testing is voluntary, and all adult eye test results are subject to annual renewal.

AVA appoints a panel of qualified eye specialists to issue ACES certificates and maintains up-to-date contact information, State by State. Eye testing appointments may be made with the ACES Panelist of your choice, either directly or through your own veterinary practice. Provided adequate facilities can be made available, breed clubs may invite an ACES Panelist to attend an organised dog show or field trial event.

ANKC registration papers and other relevant documentation (microchip/tattoo No., any previous eye exam report or current genetic test result) must be presented at the time of an ACES eye exam. All dogs (including litters) presented for assessment must be permanently identified by microchip or tattoo (whether or not that is required by State or local authority by-laws), with the number to be recorded on the ACES certificate.

The ACES Panelist will report the findings and may advise on the age range during which annual eye testing should be carried out. Registration papers will be date stamped at the time of the eye examination.