

PRA Questions & Answers on Eye Testing

Written by PRA Committee

Q: *Is it worthwhile to get my pet quality dog's eyes tested by a certified ophthalmologist?*

A: YES! The genetic PRA study that Dr Simon Peterson-Jones is doing needs the blood of afflicted Entlebuchers and their close family relatives. So yes, all dogs over 3 years old should be tested at least twice in their lifetime.

Q: *Is there any other benefit in knowing whether my entlebucher has PRA?*

A. A PRA diagnosis before eyesight becomes an issue can give you valuable time to train your entle with commands that will help him lead a fuller life as his eyesight fades. Also, getting a blind entlebucher a dog companion would help as they can be the eyes for both of them.

Q: *I know breeding dogs get tested once per year, but how about my pet quality dog, how often should s/he be tested?*

A: At least twice during his/her lifetime. Between the ages 3 (three) and 4 (four) years of age, and then again after 6 (six) years of age if passed the first exam.

Q: *My Entlebucher is 7 years old and shows no sign of vision loss, should I still get my dog's eyes tested?*

A: YES! It is a late onset PRA so you might not know your entlebucher has it until s/he is 10 years old! Also they adjust to the gradual blindness so you might not notice any vision loss for a long time.

Q: *Is it expensive to get an eye test?*

A: No, most eye doctor's charge \$25 – 45 dollars for an eye test. It is called a CERF exam.

Q: *The dog need anesthetic for the eye test, right?*

A: NO! The CERF eye test is just like going to the human eye doctor, they put drops in their eyes and

the exam takes 15 minutes. Although they do not have to read the letter charts!

Q: *Can my regular veterinarian do the eye exam?*

A: No, you need to go to a special doggie eye doctor, they are called Certified Ophthalmologist. You can go to this website to get a list of them in your area:

<http://www.vet.purdue.edu/%7Eyshen/verify.html>

Q: *After the exam, what do I do with the paperwork?*

A: Make copies of it first then fill in the back of the CERF exam report and send in \$10 to record it in the CERF database. This gives NEMDA lots of information on who is passing their eye exams. Also, please mail a copy of CERF exam to the Health and Genetics Chair, Teri Beeman, 13414 S Sherman Rd, Spokane, WA 99224. Also, Jan Vincent usually makes a beautiful quilt and you get raffle tickets by sending her copies of the eye exam or CERF number.

Q: *Is there going to be an eye clinic at any of the NEMDA events this year?*

A: YES, the PRA committee just received good news about this! At Entlefest on Saturday October 4th, there will be an eye clinic. So please bring your Entlebucher's microchip and registration number.

ERG Clinic at Entlefest!

Breeders will have a special opportunity at Entlefest this year for the most precise ERG testing. Dr. Scagliotti, an ophthalmologist, and colleague of Rebecca Hahn DVM, is offering breeders a discount on an ERG and CERF exam. The price will be \$196; which is a discount of half the original cost. He will be doing the exam in his Santa Rosa Office which is close to the Napa Fairgrounds on Friday October 3rd.

The kind of ERG done by Dr. Scagliotti is different from the one performed by most ophthalmologists. Dr Scagliotti's uses a special machine that is the