

Breed club health survey: Summary

In the summer/early autumn of 2018, the Federation of Irish Wolfhound Clubs (FIWC) did a survey among its member clubs to assess needs and concerns related to breed health. Of the 24 FIWC member clubs, 19 replied, covering 18 of the 21 countries in the federation. The clubs of Estonia, Slovakia and Russia did not fill out the survey. Some clubs completed only part of the survey.

Breed clubs

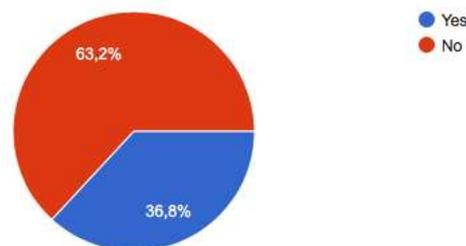
Of the 19 clubs, only 7 work solely with Irish Wolfhounds. One is working with Scottish Deerhounds and Irish Wolfhounds, while the other 11 are sighthound-clubs.

Health group status

Of the 19 clubs, 7 had a health-group working on health-related issues. For the others, health-work is assumed to be done by the club's board or a Breeding committee.

Does your breed-club have a health-group?

19 svar



Most important issues

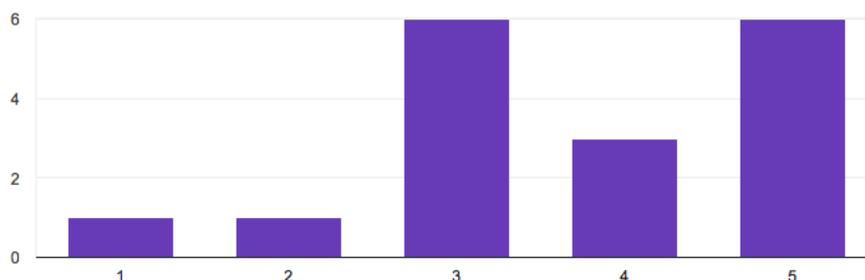
The clubs were asked to grade the current health issues in the breed according to importance in their country, with 1 being least important and 5 being most important.

The following data show average scores:

Osteosarcoma: 3.71 (17 replies)

Osteosarcoma

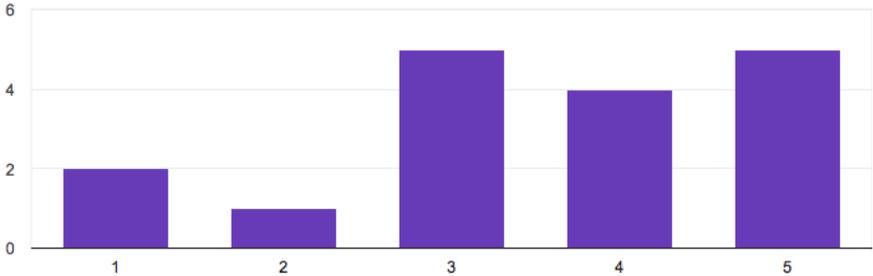
17 svar



Heart problems: 3.53 (17 replies)

Heart Problems

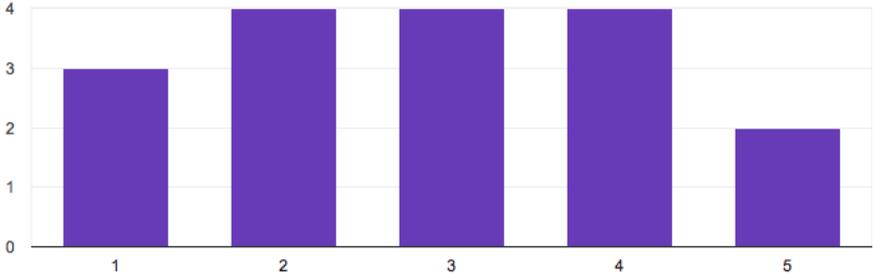
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Pneumonia: 2.88 (17 replies)

Pneumonia

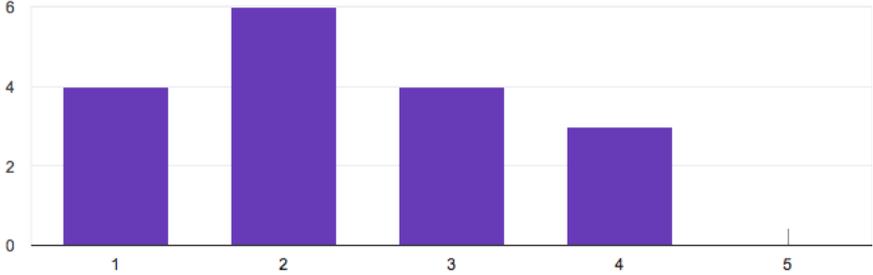
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Skeletal issues: 2.35 (17 replies)

Skeletal issues (HD, ED, OCD, Spondylosis, etc)

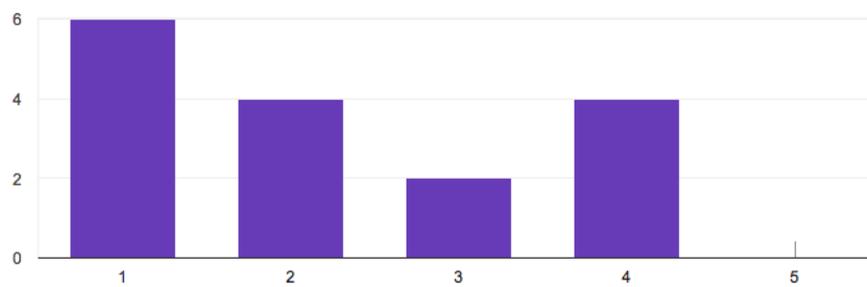
17 svar



Livershunt: 2.25 (16 replies)

Liver Shunt

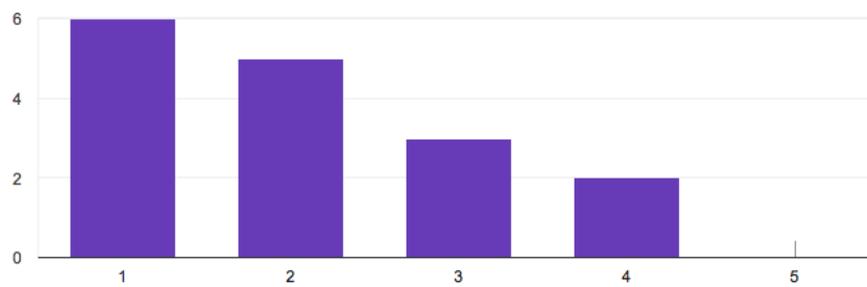
16 svar



Epilepsy: 2.06 (16 replies)

Epilepsy

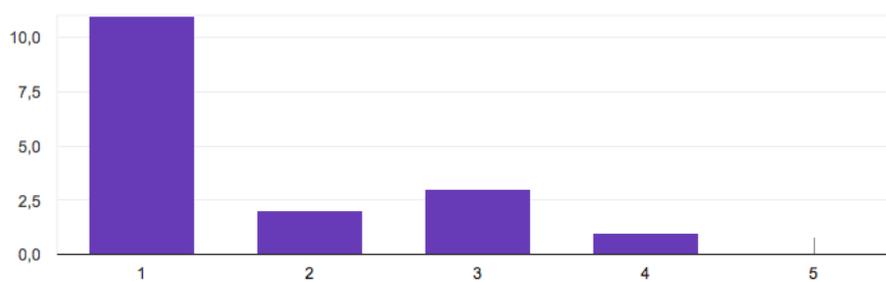
16 svar



Eye diseases: 1.65 (17 replies)

Eye diseases

17 svar



Other issues

The clubs were asked to list other health-problems they consider important in the breed.

Two of the clubs are raising special concerns about pneumonia.

Two clubs mentioned bloat and/or torsion as a significant problem.

One club mentioned narrow underjaws and lower canines going up into the gum.

One club mentioned various issues which are partly covered by the main issues:

Weak hindquarters & spondylosis; congenital and acquired/late onset megaesophagus; histiosarcoma.

Research

The clubs were asked if they were involved in any health research or other activities related to Irish wolfhound health.

Five of the clubs were doing some kind of heart research, either by sponsoring heart testing or by involvement in research related to heart-issues.

One club is involved in shunt-research.

One club is involved in pneumonia-research

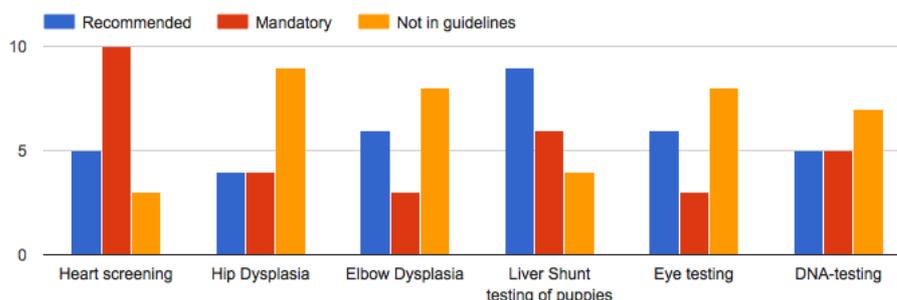
Two clubs mention doing Breed Specific Breeding Strategies and one club is doing a complete health-survey as part of this process.

Testing regime

We asked the clubs what kind of testing is recommended/mandatory and not in guidelines when breeding.

Test	Mandatory	Recommended	Not in guidelines
Heart screening of parents	10	5	3
Hip dysplasia	4	4	8
Elbow Dysplasia	3	6	8
Liver shunt testing of puppies	6	9	4
Eye testing	3	6	8
DNA testing	5	5	7

Which tests does your club recommend before breeding?



DNA testing and storing

We wanted to see how DNA is used in the various countries.

DNA samples are mandatory when breeding in six countries, while two countries require DNA-testing when applying for champion titles. In other countries it is required with dual sire litters and in one country when using frozen semen. Seven of the clubs state that the biological material is available for further testing in some way.

Help required from FIWC

14 of the clubs answered that they would like some kind of help from FIWC. Here are the replies to that question:

I wish FIWC will coordinate the efforts worldwide and will give a technical support to the breeders in the aim to improve the lifespan and to contrast the most diseases of our beloved breed

Collection of a Pedigrees with a life span. Second, guidelines for global researches and coordination between those researches documentation

Information guidelines for owners and breeders, similar to those IW Health Group offers

Some breeders are doing the heart tests but we struggle with both the cardiologist and that we cannot just decide that everybody should do it before mating. It would be nice if FIWC maybe could come with a recommendation that every body should test for heart issues. We want more research about pneumonia and also if FIWC could help so that for instance the research that Angela Bodey has done could benefit more countries. We don't get the correct treatment in Sweden and it causes death of some hounds! We get no help from the vets either! There has been research about osteosarcoma in Sweden and if they have useful information it would of course be great if more countries could benefit from that. We see that more recommendations are necessary but there are different obstacles that make it hard for us to decide what should be done before breeding. We have collected blood and been doing hearttest for many years in Sweden but still we see that it goes very slow to get the help from the vets... Regards Sofie and Marie

Information on health related issues and progress of research

As a fairly small breed club with limited resources and limited number of hounds, we would like to see coordination of ongoing research projects across countries. At the very least information spread to the breed clubs about ongoing projects and how we can contribute to them.

We also need information on research results and changes in recommendations when available. Ideally, we would like to see a health group within FIWC, working closely with The Irish Wolfhound Foundation (USA) and The Irish Wolfhound Health Group (UK) to facilitate this.

We would also like to have data collected and distributed about causes of death in various countries in order to get early knowledge of new diseases. Maybe by encouraging breed clubs to collect this information?

Finally we would like to see an overview of resources for research when breeding is international. A breeder looking for a stud dog would for instance like to be able to see health related screening results for that dog if it's registered by the national KC or breed club. An overview of these resources would be useful.

We do furtheron together internationally!!!!

Telling people what can be done and where
Sharing healthtopics and national guidelines / sharing research / DNA testing
That we have in all countries the same breeding Tests!
None, except massive support in coaxing all breed clubs to contribute data to IWDB and possibly health and longevity data to the IW Longevity study.
Some kind of open register of health-issues in pedigrees.
Any good advice to help the dogs' health.
That we have in all countries the same breeding Tests!

Bergen, October 5th 2018

Per Arne Flatberg (signed)