

Stewards
of the
Open
Bernese
Mountain
Dog
Database



The Berner-Garde Foundation was established to collect, maintain and disseminate information about genetic diseases observed in the Bernese Mountain Dog. The Berner-Garde Foundation is a 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt, not-for-profit corporation.



www.BernerGarde.org

For the
Love of a
Bernese...

Why was Berner-Garde Created?

The mission of the Berner-Garde Foundation (BGF) is to ensure that all Bernese Mountain Dogs (BMD) have a long and healthy lifespan of twelve-fourteen years.

To accomplish this goal, the incidence of several serious hereditary diseases must be decreased and, over time, eliminated. It is the hope of all who know and love a Berner that the work of the BGF will lead not only to an understanding of genetic disease(s) in an individual dog, but also in the BMD breed as a whole.

What is the Berner-Garde Foundation?

The Berner-Garde Foundation was established to collect, maintain and disseminate information about genetic diseases observed in the Bernese Mountain Dog. The Berner-Garde Foundation is comprised of a voluntary Board of Directors, several committees and, at its core, a computerized database. The database contains information which has been compiled over many years from **voluntary submissions** of data from owners and from other public sources of information, including the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA) and the Canine Eye Registration Foundation (CERF).

Information in the Berner-Garde Foundation database is available to all owners, Bernese Mountain Dog clubs, both national and international, veterinarians, researchers and other appropriate users who are working to reduce genetic disease in the BMD.

Access is through the Berner-Garde Foundation's website at www.bernergarde.org. Research proposals are handled on a case-by-case basis by the Board of Directors.

Why is a Breed Specific Database Needed?

A breed-specific database can reveal health trends before they might otherwise be noted by any one individual. By pooling data, it is possible to identify common concerns that would not be discernible from more limited information based on only a few dogs. This is why the breed-specific database is so valuable.

Leave a Legacy!

To accomplish the Berner-Garde Foundation's mission, all BMDs must be included in the database. If you own a Bernese Mountain Dog please make it your responsibility to voluntarily submit data on each dog, regardless of whether the dog will be bred. Reporting should begin at the time of birth. Every breeder is encouraged to submit data on every puppy born. Periodically, review your dog's data in the database to update and check for accuracy. Data submissions are made on line at the Berner-Garde website or forms can be requested from the Berner-Garde File Manager.

How Can Berner-Garde Help Me?

The BGF serves those who need support and information on BMD health issues. Most individual breeders choose to have small kennels, making it difficult for them to collect adequate data for breeding decisions. The Berner-Garde Foundation facilitates communication among breeders and aids in the identification of carriers of inherited problems. Breeders can reduce genetic disease in their dogs by considering the health status of siblings and offspring at the same time they are selecting for good temperament and type. ***Only by working together and sharing information openly can any long-term control of genetic disease be achieved on a breed-wide basis.***

What is Berner-Garde's Relationship to the BMDCA?

The Berner-Garde Foundation is a separately incorporated, nonprofit, tax-exempt organization, but it has a strong link to the Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America (BMDCA). The Berner-Garde Foundation's bylaws require that at least three members of the Board of Directors are either current or have been past members of the BMDCA Board. There are close working relationships between the breed club and the Berner-Garde Foundation.

Help Us Help Berners with Your Tax-Deductible Donation

Funding for the Berner-Garde Foundation comes from gifts and fund-raising projects offered by friends of the breed. Memorial and celebration contributions are encouraged. Funds are used to benefit the programs and the technology necessary to support those programs. The Foundation is run entirely by volunteers so all funds directly benefit Bernese Mountain Dogs. All donations are tax deductible, as allowed by law. Please consider a donation today for the love of a Berner. Mail your donation to:

The Berner-Garde Foundation, Inc.
c/o BGF Treasurer
3920 Evelyn Drive
North Olmsted, OH 44070
440-821-6657

Want More Information?

Visit the Berner-Garde Foundation's website at:

www.bernergarde.org

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Bernese Mountain Dog DNA and Tissue Repository

Berner-Garde Foundation and Michigan State University



What is the Repository?

A number of genetic diseases afflict our breed, such as cancers, orthopedic problems and reproductive problems. Research on these diseases has been hampered primarily by the lack of samples and insufficient medical information. BGF has long had the goal of creating a resource of pedigree and current medical information (stored in the BGF database) with available DNA and tissue (stored in a repository) for as many BMDs as possible, to facilitate BMD health research. Now it is here! Berner-Garde Foundation and Michigan State University, with support from the Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America, have established a repository that will collect, store and maintain DNA and tissue samples from a large population of BMDs, whether affected with a disorder or not, along with pedigree and medical history information. The Repository is envisioned to be a reliable resource for investigations of genetic and complex diseases that affect Bernese Mountain Dogs as well as other dog breeds and humans with similar disorders.

How Do I Submit a Specimen?

To encourage submission of samples to the Repository, the cost of registering blood, swabs and biopsy samples is covered by funds from the Berner-Garde Foundation and the BMDCA. The owner will cover the cost of shipping and veterinary costs to obtain the sample.

Blood and cheek swabs can be sampled at almost any time. A veterinarian can draw blood and you can take cheek swabs yourself! These types of submissions are especially encouraged for litters and multiple generation blood lines.

Several specimen types are accepted:

1. Blood samples
2. Cheek swabs
3. Preserved tissue biopsy samples
4. Fresh frozen tumor tissue

Collecting tissue samples may be one of the most difficult things you will do for the love of a Berner. It is only done when your dog is sick and needs a biopsy or your dog has died and you do a necropsy (an autopsy,) harvesting samples for the Repository. This is a terrible time for you and your pet, but it truly is the only way to fight the diseases that plague our beloved Berners.

The Repository accepts diagnoses from any center of your choice. However, in addition to the Repository, Michigan State University provides a separate diagnostic service with state of the art facilities through their Diagnostic Center for Population and Animal Health (DCPAH). Whichever center you use (it is a complicated process) is your personal choice, but we can more easily guide you if you choose MSU's Center.

For More Information Contact:

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www.BernerGarde.org and click on DNA / Tissue Repository