

**IMPORTANT NEWS ON CENTRNUCLEAR MYOPATHY (CNM)**  
**IN LABRADOR RETRIEVERS**

*By Debbie Newton*

There are many of us that may be unaware of Centronuclear Myopathy (CNM) in Labrador Retrievers since it has only been recently, September 2005, that the CNM testing program moved into full implementation. I know I was one of those uneducated and unaware after I received an email inquiring about our litter that is due any minute now. When asked if the sire or dam had been tested for CNM, and the answer was “no”, the sale on the pup was lost and I was dropped like a “hot potato” by the perspective buyer.

Because of that perspective buyer, whom I would like to thank for opening my eyes, I began to do a little more research and reading on the subject. I now realize how important that it is for those of us who are serious field trailers and/or breeders to participate in this testing program. Fortunately, the sire owner and I, the dam owner, have now had both of our dogs tested.

CNM is a serious disease. It is inherited. Pups may become affected if both parents have the gene or can become carriers if only one parent has the gene. Carriers appear normal, but can transmit the disease to their offspring. The disease has been around for 35 years and of serious concern for us since it can be found in several of the top field trial lines.

CNM pups fail to develop normally. At birth, affected pups are indistinguishable from their littermates, but by 2 weeks of age there is a significant weight loss. Pups can be identified as early as 4 to 5 weeks of age by tendon reflexes. By 4 to 6 months, the symptoms become very evident with the onset of an awkward gait, decreased tolerance to exercise, associated with a general muscle weakness that worsens with the cold.

It is believed that it would be a disadvantage to remove all carriers from breeding programs since this could result in a very narrow gene pool which would allow new recessives to emerge. Also, many of the highly desirable traits that we enjoy in our dogs could be lost. The identification of CNM carriers is only a tool for better breeding practices, not to totally eliminate those dogs from the gene pool.

For those of you that have internet access, you can go to [www.labradorcnm.com](http://www.labradorcnm.com) for more information and instructions for testing. For those of you without internet access, please feel free to give me a call @ 816-765-3783 for instructions, hard copies of forms and article reprints. Test kits can be ordered from Retriever Field Trial News:

**Phone call to Retriever Field Trial News at 1.414.481.2760**

**Fax sent to Retriever Field Trial News at 1.414.481.2743**

**Email to Retriever Field Trial News at [retrievernews@mindspring.com](mailto:retrievernews@mindspring.com)**

Test kits are \$5.00 + shipping. (DNA brushes to be taken to your vet.) DNA samples are then sent to Alfort School of Veterinary Medicine in France. The cost of the test results is \$60.00.