

BMD Health-Related Resources

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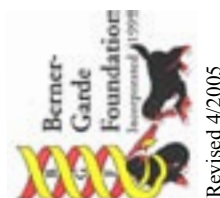
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Help Us Help Berners With Your Tax-deductible Donation

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. Your donations help us upgrade and maintain the database programs, enter new data and disseminate information. Eventually, we would like to establish a permanent endowment to fund our operations in an ongoing manner. 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
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Petoskey, MI 49770-9733
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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.

Why was Berner-Garde Created? *For the Love of a Berner*

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.

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.***

The Berner-Garde Foundation database has been used and continues to be used as a resource for researchers of tumors in Bernese Mountain Dogs. The Berner-Garde Foundation has supported an ongoing collection of tumors over a number of years. Currently, the registry contains data on over 900 tumors. As of this printing, however, The Institute for Genetic Disease Control (GDC), where the tumors are archived, is merging with OFA. GDC is maintaining the tumor registry for now. The Berner-Garde Foundation will monitor the progress of this merger and communicate through its website any new information on these developments.

How Can I Participate?

To accomplish the Berner-Garde Foundation's mission, all BMDs must be included in the database. It is a responsibility of each BMD owner 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. Data submissions are made on line at the Berner-Garde website or forms can be requested from the Berner-Garde File Manager.

What is the Berner-Garde Foundation'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. The BMDCA Health Committee and the Berner-Garde Foundation coordinate activities to be supportive of each other. Through this type of mutual cooperation all Bernese Mountain Dogs benefit.

Leave a Legacy!

All BMD owners should include all of their dogs in the Berner-Garde Foundation database. Periodically, review your dogs' data on the online database to update and check it for accuracy. Consider a donation to the Berner-Garde Foundation to help defray the costs of the database, tumor collection and its other activities. Remember, all donations are tax deductible as allowed by law. Volunteer! The Berner-Garde Foundation relies upon dedicated Berner lovers.

Want More Information?

Visit the Berner-Garde Foundation's website at www.bernergarde.org.

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