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# Meet the Beagle – Update Your Knowledge!

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Staying up to date with common, let alone rare, health risks in susceptible dog breeds can be difficult. In this regular feature, our Educational Partner, the [International Partnership for Dogs \(IPFD\)](#), signposts resources on a particular breed and highlights breed-specific diseases

## Meet the Beagle– Update Your Knowledge!

IPFD has published "[Get a GRIHP! on Beagles](#)" as an in-depth examination of the health and wellbeing of this breed.

### Merry, amiable hound

The Beagle is a British pack hound bred to hunt hare by following a scent. The UK breed standard describes the Beagle as a merry, amiable hound – and its good temperament makes the Beagle also a popular companion dog.





### Healthy breed – but a few important health conditions exist

Beagles are quite healthy and may live to 13 years or older.

The most frequent causes of death in insured Swedish Beagles were injury (especially hit by car/train/vehicle) and epilepsy. For the former, Beagles have > 2.5 times the risk in All Breeds (Agria insurance statistics 2011–2016).<sup>1</sup>

The most important health conditions in the breed are:

- **Skin conditions, allergies, infections** (anal gland the most common)
- **Epilepsy** – also **Lafora disease**, late onset progressive myoclonic (jerking) epilepsy. Age of onset from 5 years. Beagles are reported to have a more severe form of the disease and can be drug resistant.
- **Musladin-Lueke syndrome** – manifests as extensive fibrosis of the skin and joints. Age of onset from birth. A DNA test exists.
- **Steroid Responsive Meningitis (SRMA)** – an immune mediated (autoimmune) inflammatory disease. Earlier called Beagle Pain Syndrome (BPS).
- **Imlerslund-Gräsbeck syndrome** – which can present as a medical emergency. Symptoms include failure to thrive, anorexia, low white blood cells, anemia, defective blood formation, decreased immunity, vitamin B12 deficiency, metabolic disorders, excess ammonia in the blood, and protein in urine. Age of onset from 12 weeks. A DNA test exists.
- **Intervertebral Disc Disease (IVDD)**. Beagles are chondrodystrophic dogs. Chondrodystrophy is caused by a retrogene (CDDY) in the chromosome 12. The CDDY is a risk allele for Intervertebral Disc Disease (IVDD). This allele is fixed in the breed, meaning that no normal alleles exist.<sup>2</sup>

Health strategies from various countries recommend or require screening of breeding dogs, to keep watch on conditions of interest:



## Health Screening Summary by country

R1-Mandatory for registration

R2-Recommended

R3-Recognized

Condition/trait	UK	US	Finland	Sweden	Norway	Netherlands	Germany	France
Epilepsy			R2	R3	R3			
M-L Syndrome (DNA)	R1	R1	R2	R2	R2	R1		
Lafora Disease	R1	R2	R2	R2		R1	R1	
Hypothyroidism		R2		R3	R3			
SRMA				R3	R2			
Spine					R3			
I-G Syndrome (DNA)	R3					R1	R1	
Factor VII Deficiency	R3	R2						
Ataxia (DNA)	R2	R2						
DM (DNA)								R1
Hip Dysplasia		R1					R1	R1
Patella Luxation		R2						
Cardiac Disease		R1						
Eye Disease		R1						
Temperament							R1	R1

M-L = Musladin-Lueke; SRMA = Steroid Responsive Meningitis; I-G = Imlerslund-Gräsbeck; Ataxia = Neonatal Cerebellar Cortical Degeneration; DM = Degenerative Myelopathy



### Advice for Beagle owners and those considering getting a Beagle

Given its history as a hunting breed, the drive for hunting is there in every Beagle.

As pack dogs, Beagles also like to have company and need daily exercise. Keeping them alone and/or only in the house as a pet could increase problematic behavior.

Beagles are noted as a breed prone to obesity, which the owner must keep in mind. Excess weight can also increase the risk of intervertebral disease.

Beagles have a risk to skin conditions, which may require regular care throughout the dog's life.

See chart for health testing recommendations in different countries.

### More resources to help you:

1. [IPFD Get a GRIHP on the Beagle](#)
2. [UC Davis Veterinary Medicine: Chondrodystrophy \(CDDY and IVDD\) and Chondrodysplasia \(CDPA\)](#)

*The International Partnership for Dogs (IPFD) is a non-profit working for dog health, well-being, and welfare.*



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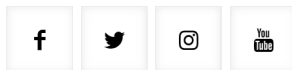
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