

## Tid-Bits

### A Bit Of This And A Bit Of That

## Does The Nose Know? The Truths And Myths Of Canine Nasal Health

It is a common belief that a wet nose is the sign of a healthy dog and that a dry nose indicates illness.

But this is not necessarily true for every canine companion, according to Dr. Erin Ray, a clinical assistant professor at the Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences.

"This historic belief is not true across the board," Ray said. "There are many factors that can cause a wet or dry nose in dogs."

A wet nose can indicate that a dog is well-hydrated or simply has a tendency to lick its nose often, which is one way a dog enhances its sense of smell. However, wet noses can also be caused by a runny nose or respiratory infection; wetness caused by heavy discharge, in particular, can indicate the need for medical care.

"Alternatively, a dog with a dry nose may live in a drier/warmer climate or just naturally have a drier nose," Ray said. "Usually, a dry nose on its own is not concerning unless the nose appears cracked, painful, or there is a dramatic change in its appearance, such as a change in color or going from bumpy to smooth."

Another issue to watch out for is sunburn, which is more common in dogs with lighter-colored noses.

"It is best for dogs to avoid being outside in the heat of the day for extended periods of time, especially during summer," Ray said. "There

are some sunscreens you can apply in a thin layer to the top of the nose, but because sunscreens can also be toxic, it's best for an owner to reach out to their veterinarian to determine the safest choice."

If a dog's nose is normally wet but becomes dry, or vice versa, a trip to the veterinarian may be warranted. Likewise, any cuts or other irregularities on the nose should be evaluated by a veterinarian to avoid infection and rule out any serious causes.

In general, Ray recommends that owners evaluate their dog as a whole and try to



avoid making health assumptions based on the wetness of their pet's nose alone.

Even though a wet nose is not always useful as an indicator of health, it does enhance a dog's sense of smell when compared to a dry nose.

"The inside of the nose itself typically works a bit better if it's moist or hydrated, just like the rest of the respiratory system," Ray said.

If a dog usually has a dry nose, applying a thin layer of petroleum jelly or the contents of a vitamin E capsule to their nose can help provide extra moisture. In addition, making sure your dog always has access to clean, fresh water can

help make sure dehydration is not a factor.

Just as every dog's nose print is unique, every dog has a unique set of factors affecting the health of its nose. If you have any questions about your dog's overall condition, a veterinarian can help you sniff out the truth.

Pet Talk is a service of the College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences, Texas A&M University.

### THE BRAC'S ARE IN AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB CELEBRATES ITS 200TH RECOGNIZED BREED

By Sarah Bank

The American Kennel Club (AKC®), the world's largest purebred dog registry and leading advocate for dogs, is excited to announce that the Bracco Italiano has received full recognition and is the AKC's 200th breed. The Bracco Italiano is eligible to compete in the Sporting Group.

"We at the AKC are thrilled to welcome our 200th breed to the registry," said Gina Dinardo, AKC Executive Secretary. "The Bracco Italiano is a strong, active, and sturdy breed of dog that would make

Joining the Sporting Group, the Bracco Italiano is an ancient breed. It is one of two native gundogs from Italy, and its history reaches back to the fourth or fifth century. The Bracco Italiano is a hunter, pointer, and retriever developed to accommodate the hunters' needs. Bracchi are tireless in the field. They are powerful and need daily exercise. They also thrive on human companionship and are loyal, affectionate, and playful. These dogs are known to be sensitive and gentle-natured and become close friends with children. Their short coats are easily maintained, requiring only a few minutes of brushing each week to keep the coat in good condition.

AKC Recognition offers the breed the opportunity to compete at all levels of AKC sports and events, as there are over 22,000 held each year. A breed that is newly recognized does not mean that the breed is newly created. Many breeds that gain full AKC recognition have existed for decades, and some are ancient. To become an AKC-recognized breed, there must be an active following and interest in the breed by owners in the U.S. and an established breed club of responsible owners and breeders. There also must be a sufficient population of dogs in the United



### Photo By Valerie Kessler

States geographically distributed throughout the country. Breeds working towards full recognition are recorded in AKC's Foundation Stock Service® (FSS®). Additional information on the process can be found at [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org).

a great companion for active families. The breed loves people and would be best suited for a family that can give it the love and attention it needs. We always encourage people to do their research to find the right breed for their lifestyle."