

LAD – Lethal Acrodermatitis

LAD is a rare, inherited autosomal recessive genetic defect found primarily in Bull Terriers and Miniature Bull Terriers. It is often compared to a severe zinc deficiency because it affects the dog's ability to metabolize minerals essential for growth and immune health.

Because the disease is progressive, severe, and incurable, affected dogs are often euthanized due to the concern of poor quality of life caused by chronic infections and the inability to eat or grow properly.

Lethal Acrodermatitis (LAD) significantly affects the physical and skeletal development of dogs, though it is primarily categorized as a metabolic and immunodeficiency disorder.

While the most prominent symptoms are skin lesions and immune failure, LAD impacts bone and structural development in the following ways:

- **Stunted Growth:** Affected puppies exhibit a severe failure to thrive and are notably smaller than their unaffected littermates. This "stunting" is a hallmark clinical sign of the disease.
- **Skeletal Deformities:** A characteristic clinical marker of LAD is an abnormally arched hard palate. This deformity often leads to the impaction of food and subsequent secondary infections.
- **Digit and Nail Abnormalities:** LAD causes splayed digits (toes) and serious deformation or degeneration of the claws. As the disease progresses, the nails become deformed and the claws may degenerate entirely.
- **Delayed Skeletal Maturation:** General growth is delayed, and affected dogs rarely reach full physical maturity due to the progressive nature of the condition. Dogs with LAD have a very short life expectancy, typically living for less than two years. The median survival time for affected puppies is only around seven months.

While LAD's impact on the skeleton is profound, it is primarily categorized as a metabolic and immunodeficiency disorder. Other symptoms include:

- **Skin Lesions:** Tightly adherent scales, crusts, and ulcerations specifically on the paws, face, elbows, and hocks.
- **Hyperkeratosis:** Severe thickening of the footpads.

- Immunodeficiency: High susceptibility to infections such as bronchopneumonia and chronic skin infections.

Again, due to the severity of the condition and lack of an effective treatment, the use of the genetic testing available to identify carriers is critical. Responsible breeders use genetic testing to identify carriers and prevent the condition.

[Lethal Acrodermatitis \(LAD\) - GenSol Diagnostics](#)

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