

HIP AND ELBOW DYSPLASIA

Hip and elbow dysplasia are developmental, multifactorial, genetically influenced conditions that are characterized by ill-fitting or loosely-fitting hip joints and the development of secondary degenerative joint disease (arthrosis).

As hip and elbow dysplasia are developmental diseases, they usually only manifests radiologically after the age of about 6 months. There is no doubt about the fact that the tendency to develop hip and elbow dysplasia are inherited but environmental factors like excessive protein intake and excessive strenuous exercise at a very young age play a role in the degree of dysplasia that is eventually manifested.

Several scientific publications written about hip and elbow dysplasia in South Africa are available elsewhere on the web site.

The SAVA together with KUSA runs a national hip/elbow dysplasia certifying scheme according to guidelines set up by the FCI and International Elbow Working Group. The grading of a dogs (and cat's) hips and elbows according international standards gives breeders an idea of the hip and elbow status of their dogs or cats which has to be considered when breeding these animals. Several dog breeds have specific minimum grading requirements before the dog or bitch may be bred. The radiographs taken by your veterinarian are sent to a veterinary radiologist, one of a group, appointed by the SAVA. These are veterinarians who are recognised as specialist radiologists by the SA Veterinary Council and some of them are also recognised as specialists by the European Association of Veterinary Diagnostic Imaging. These radiologists give an opinion as individuals but an appeal process is in place for those owners who wish to do so. KUSA and other breed societies will only accept certificates from the members of the panel.

The panel of radiologists has a chief scrutineer who acts as liaison person between the radiologists and the SAVA as well as KUSA.

The criteria for making and submitting radiographs are very strict and are in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the international bodies. Details of the procedures can be obtained from the KUSA website, SAVA website and from the radiologist that the veterinary practice uses.