A n avid participant and judge of hunting tests, Noel Cacchio knows a great deal about train-
ing Cocker Spaniels to find, flush and retrieve game. She does not know a lot about lumps on dogs, especially if the dog appears healthy.

When Cacchio felt a lump on the throat of her Senior Hunter Cocker Spaniel, Dungarvan Harmony’s Spirit, WDX, JH, SH, CD (“Spirit”), she wasted no time getting the dog into the veterinary. The 5-year-old bitch wasn’t acting sick, so Cacchio thought the lump was a reaction from a bee sting. Still, she wanted to know for certain that Spirit was OK.

“I knew from the way everybody was acting that it wasn’t good,” says Cacchio, who breeds field Cocker Spaniels in Rhinebeck, N.Y., under the Dungarvan prefix.

The veterinarian suspected Spirit’s lump was lymphoma, the third most common canine cancer. A biopsy confirmed that Spirit had lymphoma.

Though Spirit’s diagnosis and referral to veterinary oncology specialists at Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine came quickly, sometimes the road to an accurate and timely diagnosis isn’t so smooth. Most dogs show no signs of cancer until the disease is far advanced.

“Unfortunately, there is no one-size-fits-all way to diagnose cancer,” says Jaime Modiano, V.M.D., Ph.D., the Alvin S. and June Perlman Endowed Chairman in Animal Oncology at the Comprehensive Cancer Center of the University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine.

Regardless, experts agree, a few strategies can be used to help maximize the chance for a successful diagnosis and favorable outcome. When it comes to treating cancer, vigilance is crucial.

Observation Is Important

You don’t have to be a veterinarian to be instrumental in getting an accurate and timely cancer diagnosis. You do, however, have to be observant, assertive and diligent. The observation part is easy and costs nothing.

“It’s common sense when you are petting your dog to pay attention for lumps and bumps,” Modiano advises. “If you feel something, don’t delay in having it checked out.”

Lumps could be due to many different things. For example, they could be fatty lumps, benign growths arising from the sebaceous gland, swelling from an injury, or swollen lymph nodes indicating anything from a systemic infection to tick-borne disease to lymphoma. Regardless what causes a lump, veterinarians are in the best position to work with owners and diagnose the problem.

Since lymphoma is a common cancer in dogs, owners are encouraged to pay attention to the neck and jaw areas, behind the stifle (knee), and in front of the shoulder blades, advises Roe Froman, D.V.M., senior veterinary research scientist at the Van Andel Research Institute in Grand Rapids, Mich.

“Swollen lymph nodes don’t mean your dog definitely has lymphoma,” Froman says. “It could be something else, like an infection or tick-borne disease, but because of the potentially aggressive nature of lymphoma, if you do feel something swollen, you should have the veterinarian look at it.”

In some cases, tick-borne disease can be mistaken for lymphoma or vice versa. This was the case when the veterinarian examined CH Vanity Fair’s Mystic Sunrise, RN (“Dawn”), an English Springer Spaniel bred and owned by Larry and Betty Schwartz of Seal Rock, Ore. The veterinarian suspected the swollen lymph nodes were due to lymphoma, but the Schwartzes requested a “tick panel” since Dawn had recently competed in outdoor conformation shows in heavily infested tick areas.

In this case, the results showed that Dawn had been exposed to the parasitic organism *Ehrlichia canis*, which causes ehrlichiosis, the most common tick-borne disease seen in dogs. Dawn’s veterinarian prescribed the antibiotic doxycycline, which cleared up the infection.

Still, Dawn suffered some heart wall damage, which is a common development in dogs with certain tick-borne infections. After Dawn’s ehrlichiosis was resolved, a biopsy was performed to rule out that she did not also have lymphoma. Fortunately, it was negative.

“Most tick diseases are treatable, and it’s generally a much better

Tips for a Healthy Lifestyle

Owners can take steps to promote a healthy lifestyle for their dogs. Here are important considerations for healthy living:

• Be sure to have annual physical examinations. These help establish a healthy baseline for your dog that enables your veterinarian to evaluate any changes, including lumps or swollen lymph nodes.

• Regularly monitor your dog for lumps and bumps and follow up with a veterinarian should you discover something unusual.

• Avoid unnecessary exposure to potentially harmful chemicals, such as certain lawn fertilizers and pesticides.

• Maintain dogs in a healthy, lean condition and be sure dogs receive moderate exercise.

Source: Dr. Jaime Modiano of the University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine.
diagnostic picture than lymphoma,” says Larry Schwartz. “We waited to see if the doxycycline would help before testing Dawn for lymphoma.”

Ehrlichiosis was also the eventual diagnosis for MACH Tallmark’s Country Classic, CD (“Ricky”), a master agility champion Cocker Spaniel who suddenly began having severe gastrointestinal problems. “Ricky lost about 20 percent of his body weight,” says owner Felicia Mazur of Spotsylvania, Va.

Mazur spent $5,000 and months getting a definitive diagnosis for Ricky. In retrospect, she says, “It seems odd that we did not initially do a tick panel because we live in a heavy tick area. After two weeks and $50 of doxycycline, Ricky was his old self.”

What to Expect

“Owners should develop a relationship with their family veterinarian and take their dogs for complete well health visits at least once a year,” advises Modiano. “A veterinarian will explain which tests are reasonable for an individual dog, based on age and lifestyle, what to expect from testing and whether there is any risk involved. Importantly, there is no substitute for regular hands-on veterinary examinations to help monitor health changes and signs of cancer.”

When a dog presents with swollen lymph nodes or a lump, a veterinarian usually suggests a needle aspiration biopsy or surgical removal of the lymph node or lump with a biopsy of the tissue sample. The veterinarian will probably suggest other appropriate tests, such as a complete blood panel.

“Needle aspiration biopsies involve pulling out cells, staining them and looking at them under a microscope,” Froman says. “Though they are quick and easy, they are not 100 percent reliable.”

Surgical removal of the lymph node or lump and a tissue biopsy can be more reliable and reveal the specific type of cancer. “A tissue biopsy is more expensive as it involves anesthesia and is not an outpatient procedure,” Froman says.

When Froman’s Clumber Spaniel, AM/Can Ch Critter’s Hungry Heart, TD, CD, JH (“Duncan”), was diagnosed with lymphoma the day after Thanksgiving, several years ago, Froman realized how quickly a dog can decline. “By Saturday, Duncan was so sick I didn’t think he would survive the weekend,” she says.

Ultimately, owners hold the power when it comes to getting a dog properly and efficiently diagnosed. “Only an owner can become educated and empowered on behalf of his or her dog,” Modiano says. “You should learn what cancers occur commonly in your breed. You also should commit to regular physical exams and monitoring at home. If you get a cancer diagnosis, educate yourself about the disease.”

An accurate cancer diagnosis allows for treatment to begin sooner. “The treatment allowed Spirit to carry on a full life — she was never sick a day in those first 16 months of chemo,” Caclio says. “Finally, the protocol stopped working, and the side effects...”

Purina appreciates the support of the American Spaniel Club and particularly Bobbie Kolehouse, director of the grants committee and member of the scientific research committee of the ASC Foundation, in helping to identify topics for the Purina Pro Club Cocker Spaniel Update newsletter.

Want to Reach the Editor?

Have comments about Purina Pro Club Update? Send them to us at: Purina Pro Club Update, c/o Editor, Nestlé Purina PetCare, 2T Checkerboard Square, St. Louis, MO 63164 or via e-mail at today@breeder@purina.com.

Send Us Your Questions

Have questions about your Purina Points or how to redeem weight circles for rewards or rebate checks? Contact Purina Pro Club at (877) PRO-CLUB, or (877) 776-2582, between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. CST Monday through Friday. You also may visit www.purina proclub.com to review and redeem Purina Points.

Exocrine Pancreatic Insufficiency May Have Complex Inheritance Pattern

R esearchers studying exocrine pancreatic insufficiency (EPI), a disease in which food is not properly digested and absorbed, believe that the condition may have a complex mode of inheritance. Prevalent in German Shepherd Dogs, Rough-Coated Collies and Chow Chows, EPI affects more than 100 breeds.

Leigh Anne Clark, Ph.D., assistant professor of genetics and biochemistry at Clemson University, is studying the genetic variations between 100 healthy German Shepherd Dogs and 100 EPI-affected German Shepherd Dogs. “EPI may result from mutations in multiple genes or from both genetic and environmental factors,” she says. “If we can identify the gene or major gene trait for EPI, we will be able to develop a genetic test. Breeders could then determine which dogs are at risk for developing EPI.”

EPI is a disorder in which the pancreas fails to produce an adequate amount of digestive enzymes. Without those enzymes, food is not properly digested and absorbed. No matter how much food is ingested, a dog with EPI can literally starve to death. Signs of EPI include weight loss, ravenous appetite, diarrhea, eating feces, vomiting, gas, changes in temper¬ament, and loose, foul-smelling stool. The disease can strike at any age, but signs many not appear until as much as 90 percent of the pancreas is destroyed.

The most common cause of EPI in dogs is pancreatic acinar atrophy (PAA) in which the acinar cells in pancreatic tissue decrease in number and function. Acinar cells produce enzymes that help digest carbohydrates, fats and proteins. These enzymes help break down food into smaller parts so nutrients can be absorbed through the intestinal wall. Though little is known about the cause of PAA, researchers believe the condition is genetically inherited.

EPI can also develop due to chronic pancreatitis, or inflammation of the pancreas. The pancreas synthesizes all the major digestive enzymes, but repeated bouts of pancreatitis can destroy acinar cells that synthesize these enzymes. In rare cases, EPI results from pancreatic cancer or pancreatic hypoplasia, a congenital condition in which the exocrine pancreas does not fully develop.

Though EPI cannot be cured, it can be managed with a good prognosis. Pancreatic enzyme supplements can be given to replace the naturally occurring digestive enzymes depleted by EPI. Most EPI dogs also require diet modification, including reducing fiber or grain. Until a genetic test is developed, breeders are advised not to breed dogs with EPI or to repeat matings that produced affected dogs.

To learn more about EPI, you may visit www.epi4dogs.com, a Web site begun by the owner of a Spanish Water Dog affected by the condition. The site offers comprehensive information about the disease and includes before- and after-treatment photographs, the latest research findings and a list of affected breeds.
Pro Plan Selects Natural Dog Food Is Made Without Corn, Soy or Wheat

P urina Pro Plan brand Selects natural dog food will soon offer optimal nutrition formulated without corn, soy or wheat. Pro Plan Selects already is made without added artificial favors, colors or preservatives. The new formulas without corn, soy and wheat are coming in July. New packaging for the six natural dog foods in the Selects portfolio is also coming in July. The new Selects packaging notes the excluded ingredients and promotes the inclusion of real meat as the No. 1 ingredient, whole grains, and egg and pea protein sources. Easy to read and understand, the Selects packaging features the same soulful photographs of purebred dogs that were featured on the original packaging.

The six formulas in the Selects line are:

- **Pro Plan Selects Natural Turkey & Barley Puppy Formula Plus Essential Vitamins and Minerals;**
- **Pro Plan Selects Natural Turkey & Barley Adult Formula Plus Essential Vitamins and Minerals;**
- **Pro Plan Selects Natural Turkey & Barley Senior Formula Plus Essential Vitamins and Minerals;**
- **Pro Plan Selects Natural Chicken & Brown Rice Adult Formula Plus Essential Vitamins and Minerals;**
- **Pro Plan Selects Natural Salmon & Brown Rice Adult Formula Plus Essential Vitamins and Minerals;**
- **Pro Plan Selects Natural Beef & Barley Adult Formula Plus Essential Vitamins and Minerals.**

Offering complete and balanced nutrition for each specified life stage, Pro Plan Selects contains nutrients to help support a dog’s immune and digestive systems and promote healthy skin and coat. The omega-3 fatty acids DHA (docosahexaenoic acid) and EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid), combined with natural sources of glucosamine, help support healthy cartilage and joints. Pro Plan Selects contain the easily absorbed chelated minerals zinc, copper and manganese. Chelated minerals are bonded to an amino acid, making them easy to digest and be used by the body. Pro Plan Selects is sold at PetSmart, PETCO, and pet specialty and farm supply stores. For information, visit www.proplan.com or to talk with a pet nutrition consultant, call 800-PRO-PLAN, or 800-887-7526, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Central time Monday through Friday.

Purina Event Center Soon to Open at Purina Farms

T he dog fancy will soon have a new venue for holding dog shows, agility and obedience trials when the world-class Purina Event Center opens in September at Gray Summit, Mo. Construction of the multimillion-dollar indoor facility will be completed this summer ahead of schedule, says Director Brock Fitzgerald.

Events already are being booked. National Specialties scheduled for this fall include the Ibizan Hound Club of the United States, the Border Collie Society of America. All-breed dog shows include the Three Rivers Kennel Club of Missouri and the Gateway Cluster. The Doberman Pinscher Club of St. Louis Specialty Show is also scheduled.

The United Kennel Club (UKC) has announced a new event, the UKC Gateway Nationals, which will be held Oct. 29 to 31 and include conformation and dock jumping, with agility, obedience and rally competitions planned for the future. The United Flyball League International is planning to hold its Tournament of Champions Nov. 12 to 14. The 45,000-square-foot main exhibition hall and the adjoining 13,500-square-foot benching and grooming area were designed to provide comfort and convenience for exhibitors and guests. Amenities include: 158 grooming stations with electrical access; six stainless steel dog bathing tubs with easy access ramps; skid-resistant, coated-concrete flooring in the grooming area; special padded sport flooring; high-efficiency fluorescent lighting that shows the true colors of dogs’ coats; free wireless Internet service; several drop-off entrances for unloading grooming supplies and equipment; and 24-hour security.

For more information, visit the Purina Farms’ Web site at www.purinafarms.com. To inquire about reservations, you may call 888-688-688, or 888-688-7387, or send an e-mail to Brock.Fitzgerald@purina.nestle.com.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<td>Northeastern Brace Beagle Federation</td>
<td>May 17 to 21</td>
<td>Hunlock Creek, PA</td>
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<tr>
<td>PKC (Professional Kennel Club) Walker Days</td>
<td>May 13 to 15</td>
<td>McAlester, OK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purina Labrador Retriever Awards</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arkansas State Championship (UKC Coonhound)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ducks Unlimited Sporting Exposition</td>
<td>May 28 to 30</td>
<td>Grapevine, TX</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Redbone Days</td>
<td>June 4 to 5</td>
<td>Mishicot, WI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purina All-Age and Top Shooting Dog Awards</td>
<td>June 4 to 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional Kennel Club (PKC) National</td>
<td>June 10 to 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Retriever National Amateur Championship</td>
<td>June 16 to 26</td>
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*This table lists some, but not all, upcoming sporting events sponsored by Purina.
New Pro Plan Champions Cup Offers Cash Prize & Cruise to Winner

The winner of the 2010 Pro Plan Champions Cup will receive a $10,000 cash prize and a trip for two on next year’s K-9 College Cruise to the Caribbean. Cash prizes also will be awarded to the second, third and fourth place finishers.

“The Pro Plan Champions Cup was introduced 10 years ago to honor those who promote excellence in the sport of purebred dogs through conformation dog shows and to support the dog fancy,” says Ann Viklund, Purina Director of Breeder-Enthusiast Marketing. “We are very excited to expand to a yearlong program that includes all Purina-sponsored all-breed dog shows.”

Previously, the Pro Plan Champions Cup was awarded to the dog earning the most points at three select Purina-sponsored benched dog shows. Now, over 200 all-breed dog shows are included. At the end of 2010, points will be tabulated based on the following:

- Best in Show, 5 points;
- Group One, 4 points;
- Group Two, 3 points;
- Group Three, 2 points; and
- Group Four, 1 point.

The dog earning the most points will win the $10,000 cash prize, K-9 College Cruise and a keepsake Pro Plan Champions Cup trophy. A permanent Pro Plan Champions Cup will be displayed at the new Purina Event Center along with a plaque engraved with the winners’ names. The Event Center opens in September 2010.

Cash prizes will be awarded to the top-placing dogs as follows:

- Second place, $5,000;
- Third place, $2,500; and
- Fourth place, $1,250.

More information about the 2010 Pro Plan Champions Cup, a running tabulation of individual dogs’ points, and a complete list of qualifying shows are available on the Purina Pro Club Web site at www.purinaproclub.com. See the Purina-Sponsored Dog Show calendar (below) for upcoming events that are part of the competition.

The Pro Plan Champions Cup is sponsored by Purina Pro Plan brand dog food.

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**Purina-Sponsored Dog Shows**

**May to June 2010**

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<th>Location</th>
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<td>May 9-14</td>
<td>Fort Mitchell, KY</td>
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<td>Colonial Rottweiler Specialty</td>
<td>May 11-13</td>
<td>Lancaster, PA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miami Valley Labrador Retriever Club Specialty</td>
<td>May 14-15</td>
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<td>Rio Grande Kennel Club Dog Show¹</td>
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<td>Atlantic Shore Memorial Cluster²</td>
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<td>Chihuahua National Roving Specialty</td>
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<td>Mississippi Valley Kennel Club Dog Show²</td>
<td>June 5-6</td>
<td>Purina Farms Gray Summit, MO</td>
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<td>Flagstaff Kennel Club Dog Show²</td>
<td>June 12-13</td>
<td>Flagstaff, AZ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Central Florida Cluster²</td>
<td>June 24-27</td>
<td>Orlando, FL</td>
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¹ This table list some, but not all, upcoming Purina-sponsored dog shows.

² Denotes an event that is part of the 2010 Pro Plan Champions Cup competition.