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## Health Statement for the Doberman Pinscher Club of America (DPCA)

### Health Guidelines for purchasing a Doberman Pinscher

*Written by Dr. May Jacobson and approved by the DPCA Board of Directors on January 6, 2016*

Heart disease (cardiomyopathy), thyroid disease (hypothyroidism), liver disease (chronic active hepatitis-CAH), and neck instability (Cervical vertebral instability-CVI, Wobblers) are hereditary diseases in Doberman Pinschers. Unfortunately, there are no tests that can predict whether or not the dog will be affected sometime in their life by these diseases.

For heart disease, it is recommended that breeding animals be evaluated by a cardiologist to rule out current problems. The two tests that are recommended are Echocardiogram (ultrasound) of the heart and Holter monitor (electrocardiogram-EKG, usually done over a 24-hour period).

For thyroid disease, it is recommended to periodically run a blood test to ensure normal levels of thyroid hormones. Breeding animals should occasionally be checked for thyroid function.

CVI is very difficult to predict. The occurrence in related individuals may help but is not reliable in predicting whether an individual animal may be affected. There are no tests that are accurate in determining the presence of disease.

Doberman hepatitis is different from the viral disease that vaccinations are used to prevent. Fortunately, it is not very common. Screening for the disease is done by blood tests that are typically run by veterinarians in the chemistry profiles.

Von Willebrand's disease (vWD) is a clotting abnormality, similar to hemophilia seen in humans. Fortunately, there is a genetic (DNA) test for vWD. Clear and carrier dogs do not have the problem. Affected dogs may have bleeding issues, but it is difficult to predict in advance. Fortunately, vWD in Dobermans is a mild form of the disease. All breeding animals should be checked in advance prior to breeding. DNA tests can even be performed in puppies.

Eye disease is relatively uncommon in Dobermans. It is recommended that dogs be evaluated by a Veterinary Ophthalmologist prior to breeding. The documentation for the eye examination is a number through CERF, Canine Eye Registration Foundation.

Hip dysplasia is relatively uncommon in Dobermans. It is recommended that dogs be evaluated by radiography (X-rays) prior to breeding to rule out the presence of hip dysplasia. These X-rays are typically sent to Orthopedic Foundation for Animals for an evaluation.

The Doberman Pinscher Club of America has instituted a longevity registry. Dogs that live to be 10 years of age or older are awarded a Longevity Certificate (LC). Dogs that are by parents that both have LC certificates are awarded Bred For Longevity Certificates (BFL). Dogs coming from lines that have longevity are more likely to live long and healthy lives.