



## CHIC and Westies

**CHIC, the Canine Health Information Center**, is a centralized canine health database jointly sponsored by the AKC/Canine Health Foundation and the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (**OFA**). CHIC is endorsed by the West Highland White Terrier of America and the Westie Foundation of America.

A CHIC number and report is issued once a dog's breed specific test results are entered into the database. Owner approval is required for results to be published. However, CHIC encourages sharing all results, whether normal or abnormal. **All dogs must have permanent identification (microchip or tattoo) for entry into the database.**

**The breed specific requirements for West Highland White Terriers include the results of three screenings:**

**1. Hip X-ray:** A hip X-ray is used to determine the absence or presence of hip dysplasia and Legg-Calvé-Perthes. The hip X-ray can be done at your vet's office or at an OFA Clinic sponsored by a kennel club. Dogs should be at least two years of age before screened and short acting anesthesia is recommended to insure accuracy of the X-ray. Bitches immediately coming into or going out of season should not submit hip X-rays since hormonal influences could alter results. Waiting at least 2 months after a bitch comes out of season is recommended. The vet who performs the X-ray fills out an official OFA form and sends the digital X-rays with an accompanying fee to the OFA.

*\*Results from the OFA database indicate that 12% of westies have abnormal ratings for hips.*

**2. Patellar Screening:** Your vet can evaluate the patellas of your dog and determine if there is any evidence of luxation. This does not require an X-ray. Dogs should be at least one year of age before being evaluated. The vet fills out an official OFA form and the owner submits the form with accompanying fee to the OFA.

**3. CERF (Canine Eye Registration Foundation) Exam:** This exam is used to diagnose eye diseases and must be done by a certified ophthalmologist who has the necessary forms that need to be submitted to CERF along with an accompanying fee. It is recommended that CERF exams be done yearly. The dog's eyes need to be dilated twenty minutes before the exam. The effects of the dilation subside within two hours and during this time period the dog should not be exposed to bright sunlight. The CERF website for more information is [www.vmdb.org/cerf.html](http://www.vmdb.org/cerf.html). Many dog shows have CERF clinics in addition to the clinic frequently offered during the Westie national specialty in October.

*\*At the CERF clinic held during the Centennial week, 10.8-17 % of the 66 Westies tested were identified with eye abnormalities.*

**Forms Required:** Application forms must be submitted for entry into the hip and patella database. The forms can be downloaded from the OFA website at [www.offa.org](http://www.offa.org) and should be given to your vet when you have scheduled a hip X-ray or patellar screening. A board-certified ophthalmologist will provide the necessary CERF form upon completion of an eye exam.

CHIC has an excellent website located at [www.caninehealthinfo.org](http://www.caninehealthinfo.org). The website contains basic information about CHIC, such as its mission and goals, and maintains a listing of breeds and approved breed specific test protocols.

