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Inbreeding coefficient update
 The average inbreeding coefficient for Bichons in 2016/17 is 11.2%, only 0.1% up on the previous year. Looking at the last 5 years we could safely say that our coefficient is steady. The toy breed with the lowest coefficient is the Coton de Tulear at 2.5% . Lowchens have the highest at 19.6%

Did you know that conkers are toxic to dogs? They contain a poison called aesculin for which there is no known antidote, so watch out that your bichon does not chew a conker when out for a walk

Health is the greatest gift, contentment the greatest wealth, faithfulness the best relationship. - Buddha

Once again we have a short newsletter as thankfully there is little of concern being reported.

We decided that, after the success of our last survey, we should wait three years to carry out our next one. So 2018 will be the year of the survey! We are working out a way to extend the survey internationally which will be quite a task. If we succeed the results will be grouped by Continent but the UK will still be reported separately. No promises that we can do it but we will certainly try.

Of some concern to me is the description of the Bichon Frise on several web sites and these sites are often visited by people deciding on a breed to bring into their family. There are statements such as 'It's been estimated that as many as 50% of Bichons suffer from some sort of skin allergy'. Another site lists 16 diseases, some of which I have never heard of, that bichons are prone to. When our survey is complete I intend to send the results to as many sites as possible in the hope that they will review their description of our breed with more accurate and up-to-date data.



Essential oils and diffusers

With the increasing use of essential oils comes an increase in dogs needing veterinary treatment. Some oils are considered to help certain ailments provided they are used with the correct dilution, which is best left to experts, however there are some oils that are actually poisonous to pets. Inhaling poisonous fumes over a long period can do untold harm to your bichon. If using aromatherapy burners or diffusers please be aware of the following list of oils that should never be used near dogs. If in doubt do without!

Anise	Cloves	Oregano	Terabinth
Birch	Garlic	Pennyroyal	Thuja
Bitter Almond	Goosefoot	Rue	Thyme
Bolodo	Horseradish	Santolina	Wintergreen
Calamus	Hyssop	Sassafras	Wormwood
Camphor	Juniper	Savory	Yarrow
Cassia	Mugwort	Tansy	
Chenopodium	Mustard	Tea Tree	

In bold are the better known essential oils with Tea Tree being the most common

Eye Testing

98 eye tests were carried out in 2017 with all bichons unaffected by hereditary cataracts. Whilst this is good news the number of bichons being tested is going down; 134 eye tests were carried out in 2014 You can find dates of forthcoming eye testing sessions at www.bva.co.uk/Canine-Health-Schemes/Eye-scheme/ or alternatively look in the dog press. The Bichon Frise Club of GB is putting on an Eye Testing session at their open show on 8 April, a perfect opportunity to keep up to date with eye tests.