



JACA Health Statement for AKC 2025

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The Japanese Akita Inu (JA) is a generally healthy breed with a life expectancy of 10-12 years.

The Japanese Akita Inu Club of America (JACA) recommends that JA breeders perform the following physical health screenings on all breeding stock:

- OFA Eyes – an eye screening to rule out juvenile cataracts, persistent pupillary membranes and over 50 other eye diseases. This screening must be done every year until the age of 6, and every 2 years thereafter
- OFA Hips – a hip screening to rule out hip dysplasia which can occur in any large breed as early as 5-6 months. OFA screening is done at 2 years of age (preliminary OFA screening may be done between 12 -24 months). PennHIP radiography may be assessed earlier.
- OFA Thyroid – a thyroid screening to rule out autoimmune thyroiditis. OFA recommends annual screening as results can vary over time, including results for TGAA.
- OFA Tooth Enamel – a DNA test to rule out the causative mutation for Amelogenesis Imperfecta (Familial Enamel Hypoplasia) in the ACP4-gene. This test can be done at any age as results will not change over time.
- OFA Patellas – a knee screening to rule out patellar luxation conditions which can occur in any large breed even as a puppy. OFA screening is done at 12 months and later.
- OFA Elbows – an elbow screening to rule out elbow dysplasia which can occur in any large breed from six months of age or older. OFA screening is done at 2 years of age.

Dogs tested in accordance with these protocols are recognized with a Canine Health Information Center (CHIC) number and certification.

Additionally, JACA encourages breeders and owners to be aware of autoimmune conditions, such as Sebaceous Adenitis (SA) or the canine version of Vogt-Koyanagi-Harada syndrome (VKH) known as Uveodermatologic Syndrome (UDS) which may affect JA. At the time of this writing, no genetic tests for such conditions are available.

As in all double or triple-coated breeds, dental, nail and coat maintenance is important. Daily/weekly brushing will help your dog maintain healthy teeth and gums throughout their lifetime. Routine grooming will mitigate overgrown nails which may alter movement, cause pain, and prevent coat matting and skin issues.

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