



Embark returns as the official canine DNA test of the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show

Embark announces preliminary research findings linking elevated levels of inbreeding to shorter lifespan in dogs; partners with breeders in commitment to improve long-term canine health

Boston, MA (February 8, 2020) — [Embark Veterinary, Inc.](#), a global leader in dog genetics, today announced its partnership with the iconic Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show. This marks the second year Embark and Westminster have teamed up; the two organizations share a common goal to advance canine health research and increase the longevity and vitality of dogs.

“We are excited and proud to partner with the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show,” said Ryan Boyko, co-founder and CEO of Embark. “The show’s global reputation is unparalleled and gives us a chance to jointly raise awareness and increase the use of genetic health testing to positively impact the health and wellness of dogs.”

Embark recently completed a preliminary research study using genetic coefficient of inbreeding (COI), that demonstrates that a higher COI is a partial predictor of shortened lifespan and decreased litter size. When looking at a single breed, the least inbred dogs can live on average a full year longer than the most inbred dogs; in some breeds this effect is even larger. The same holds true across mixed breed dogs accounting for body size and other important factors.

Responsible breeders have recently become increasingly aware of the importance of diversity in breeding healthy dogs. Before Embark, they used a dog’s pedigree to help inform optimal mating pairs. However, while pedigrees provide a useful reference point, they are less accurate than robust genetic measures of inbreeding. By combining the art of breeding with the science of Embark’s DNA testing, breeders can help future generations of dogs live longer, healthier lives.

“Measuring and utilizing genetic COI information empowers breeders to improve the long term health of their lines in a way that’s impossible to do with pedigree data alone,” said Adam Boyko, co-founder and chief science officer of Embark. “The owners and breeders involved in dog sports have long been supporters of canine health research, which makes announcing these preliminary findings at Westminster that much more empowering. We’ve already published several papers on genetic COI and genetic diversity in purebred dogs, and will be continuing to expand this research and build tools for breeders to support our shared goal of canine genetic health.”

In addition to supporting responsible breeders, an Embark Dog DNA Test enables a mixed-breed dog owner to learn about their dog’s breed ancestry, health, and more with a simple cheek swab. Through its research-grade DNA genotyping platform, Embark identifies more than 250 dog breeds in mixed-breed dogs and more than 170 genetic health conditions and traits in purebred and mixed breed dogs.

The Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show takes place from Saturday, February 8, 2020 to Monday, February 10, 2020 in New York City, NY.

About Embark

Embark Veterinary, Inc. launched in 2015 with a mission to end preventable disease in dogs. An Embark Dog DNA Test enables pet owners to learn about their dog’s breed, ancestry, health, and what diseases may be in the future – all with a simple cheek swab. By using over twice as much genetic information than any other test available, the company offers the most accurate results on the market. Embark was started by two brothers, Adam and Ryan Boyko, who have a passion for scientific research and a lifelong love of dogs. Embark is an official research partner of Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine.

Embark is the official dog DNA test of the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show. For further information, visit Embark’s website at Embarkvet.com, or follow Embark on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

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