

# Buying a St Bernard Puppy

## What to expect from a Breeder who puts Health, Welfare and Temperament First

Giant breeds of dog tend to have shorter lifespans and may have health problems linked to their extreme size. Avoid a puppy whose parents have excessive loose facial skin, so that their eyelids do not function properly.



### ✓ Essential Documents

- Signed AWF Puppy Contract
- KC Registration Certificate (if applicable)
- Microchip Registration Certificate
- Temporary Pet Health Insurance
- Vaccination Certificate
- Copies of Health Certificates

#### A good breeder will

- have socialised and habituated the puppy
- provide a supply of food
- provide a blanket smelling of Mum
- follow the Code of Practice for Dog Breeding



### Health Certificates (Both Parents)

#### Official Health Schemes

- BVA/KC scheme for hip dysplasia (HD)
- BVA/KC scheme for elbow dysplasia (ED)
- BVA/KC screening for eye disease. DBRG recommends that all dogs should be visually examined by an ophthalmologist before breeding (includes checks for many inherited and conformation-related diseases)

#### DNA tests relevant to breed

- Polyneuropathy and juvenile-onset inherited laryngeal paralysis

<https://www.stbernardhealth.co.uk/>  
[www.dbrg.uk/guide-to-buying-a-puppy.html](http://www.dbrg.uk/guide-to-buying-a-puppy.html)





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Brief explanations and other diseases that may be more common in the breed – if in doubt then consult your vet for guidance

## Official Health Schemes

**Hip dysplasia** - abnormal formation of the hip joint - pain and lameness

**Elbow dysplasia** - abnormal formation of the elbow joint - pain and lameness

The **BVA/KC eye testing scheme** checks for many inherited and physical abnormalities that can cause progressive blindness or pain

## DNA tests relevant to breed

**Polyneuropathy and juvenile-onset inherited laryngeal paralysis** – progressive muscle weakness and/or breathing problems

## Other Diseases - no current health scheme or DNA test available

**Bloat/GDV (gastric dilation and volvulus)** - where the stomach inflates with air and twists, sometimes fatally

**Dermatitis** - inflammation of skin, more likely if excessive loose skin

**'Cherry eye'** - protruding gland of third eyelid in young dogs, may require surgery

**DCM - Dilated cardiomyopathy** – progressive enlargement of heart, often fatal

### Ear infections

**Ectropion** – drooping lower eyelids

**Entropion** – inward turning eyelids that rub on eyeballs (may be combined with ectropion)

**Osteosarcoma** – bone cancer

