



# Alabama Rot – an unexplained dog illness

## July 2014 Update

The number of dogs affected by Alabama Rot seems to be decreasing as the year progresses with the last confirmed case being in early June 2014.

A manuscript summarising the findings will be submitted by veterinary specialists this month with publication anticipated later in the year.

## Background

Alabama rot is a disease that has been known about since the late 1980s in the USA. Since December 2012 a number of suspected and confirmed cases have been seen in counties throughout the UK.

Dogs reported with the disease can suffer kidney failure and/or skin lesions. The cause of the disease remains unknown.

The disease does not appear to pass from dog to dog.

## Context

Although reports come from people who have walked their dog in the countryside, the cause of the disease remains unknown.

Many thousands of dogs are walked in the countryside every day and it is important to remember that only a very small number of dogs have been affected.

Most skin lesions will not be caused by this disease and most cases of kidney failure will have another cause.

## What should I look out for?

The skin lesions are a symptom of the disease rather than being traumatic wounds from an injury. Typically the skin lesions have been below the knee or elbow. They may present as a focal swelling, a patch of red skin or a defect in the skin (like an ulcer). Over the subsequent two to seven days the affected dogs have developed clinical signs of kidney failure which can include vomiting, reduced appetite and tiredness.

## What should I do?

If you are concerned about your dog please speak to your local vet. If your dog is affected, early recognition of the disease and aggressive management is likely to lead to the best outcome.

It is important to stress that the case numbers are very low. Without knowing the trigger for the disease it is impossible to give specific advice about walking your dog.

Anderson Moores Veterinary Specialists have produced a helpful [fact sheet for dog owners](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/Alabama-Rot-2014_03_10_for-owners.pdf/$FILE/Alabama-)  
([http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/Alabama-Rot-2014\\_03\\_10\\_for-owners.pdf/\\$FILE/Alabama-](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/Alabama-Rot-2014_03_10_for-owners.pdf/$FILE/Alabama-)

([http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/Alabama\\_Rot\\_2014\\_03\\_10\\_for-owners.pdf/\\$FILE/Alabama\\_Rot-2014\\_03\\_10\\_for-owners.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/Alabama_Rot_2014_03_10_for-owners.pdf/$FILE/Alabama_Rot-2014_03_10_for-owners.pdf))

If you are a vet, please direct your enquiries to Anderson Moores Veterinary Specialists on 01962 767920 or email [info@andersonmoores.com](mailto:info@andersonmoores.com).

## Questionnaire

The Animal Health Trust has launched an online survey to help with the investigation. You can help by completing the survey whether or not your dog has been ill: [www.aht.org.uk/alabamarot](http://www.aht.org.uk/alabamarot).

## Where have cases been to date?

The following table outlines all cases being referred to as Alabama Rot (identified and confirmed) to date from across the UK (not just walks including the Forestry Commission's Public Forest Estate). It will be kept updated with new information as received from Anderson Moores Veterinary Specialists who have been collating information on the cases and leading the investigation.






Please note that we will aim to keep this table updated as promptly as possible, but we are not able to update the information in response to media reported cases or those from individuals. This is to ensure that what is published is as accurate as possible, coming from Anderson Moores who can verify cases as accurately as possible through scientific investigation.

'Unconfirmed' cases are either awaiting test results, or may never be confirmed if no tissue was available for examination.

Locations in green include cases found on the Forestry Commission's Public Forest Estate. Click on the location for more information.

LAST UPDATED 22nd July 2014:

<b>Cases Dec 2012 – May 2013</b>	
<b>Confirmed 13</b>	<b>Unconfirmed 2</b>
<p>5 <a href="http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-9H4L5Z#New Forest Dec 12-March13">New Forest, Hampshire</a> (<a href="http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-9H4L5Z#New Forest Dec 12-March13">http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-9H4L5Z#New Forest Dec 12-March13</a>)</p> <p>1 Upton, Poole, Dorset</p> <p>7 elsewhere UK (including: Cornwall; Worcestershire; County Durham; Surrey, Nottinghamshire)</p>	<p>2 New Forest, Hampshire</p>
<b>Cases Dec 2013 – Present</b>	
<b>Confirmed 31</b>	<b>Unconfirmed 15</b>

<p>10 <a href="http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-9H4L5Z#New_Forest_present">New Forest, Hampshire</a>  (<a href="http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-9H4L5Z#New_Forest_present">http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-9H4L5Z#New_Forest_present</a>)</p> <p>1 Yorkshire</p> <p>1 Monmouthshire</p> <p>4 Dorset</p> <p>1 Shropshire</p> <p>2 Surrey</p> <p>1 <a href="http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-9H4L5Z#Northamptonshire_present">Northamptonshire</a> (<a href="http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-9H4L5Z#Northamptonshire_present">http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-9H4L5Z#Northamptonshire_present</a>)</p> <p>2 Somerset </p> <p>1 Petersfield, Hampshire</p> <p>2 Lancashire</p> <p>5 Greater Manchester</p> <p>1 Kent</p>	<p>9 <a href="http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-9H4L5Z#New_Forest_dec13-present_unconfirmed">New Forest, Hampshire</a>  (<a href="http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-9H4L5Z#New_Forest_dec13-present_unconfirmed">http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-9H4L5Z#New_Forest_dec13-present_unconfirmed</a>)</p> <p>2 Cheshire</p> <p>1 Co. Antrim</p> <p>1 Dorset</p> <p>1 West Sussex</p> <p>1 Somerset  (1 survivor)</p>
<p>Total: 44 </p>	<p>Total: 17</p>

## Related documents

- [Anderson Moores Veterinary Specialists - helpful fact sheet for dog owners.](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/Alabama-Rot-2014_03_10_for-owners.pdf/$file/Alabama-Rot-2014_03_10_for-owners.pdf)  
([http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/Alabama-Rot-2014\\_03\\_10\\_for-owners.pdf/\\$file/Alabama-Rot-2014\\_03\\_10\\_for-owners.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/Alabama-Rot-2014_03_10_for-owners.pdf/$file/Alabama-Rot-2014_03_10_for-owners.pdf))

## Useful sites

- [Anderson Moores Veterinary Specialists website](#)
- [Animal Health Trust website](#)
- [Animal Health Trust online survey to help with the investigation.](#)