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- [journal articles](#)
- [contacts](#)

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**TECHNICAL SERVICES**  
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*"Every dog in need of a transfusion should be blood typed."*

- Urs Giger, PD, Dr.med.vet.,MS, FVH; Diplomate, ACVIM and ECVIM

DMS laboratories, Inc. offers several choices for easy to use, rapid testing that can be used in the veterinary clinic, or even under field conditions, to determine if a dog is blood type DEA 1.1 positive or negative.

The most important canine blood type is DEA 1.1. Dogs that are DEA 1.1 positive (33% to 45% of the population) can be considered to be universal recipients, in that they can receive blood of any type for their first transfusion without expectation of a life-threatening Hemolytic Transfusion Reaction ("HTR"). Dogs that are DEA 1.1 negative can be considered universal donors, to the extent that they can donate blood to both DEA 1.1 negative or positive dogs. . Blood from DEA 1.1 positive dogs should **never** be transfused into DEA 1.1 negative dogs. If it is the dog's first transfusion, the transfused red cells will have a shortened life due to the formation of alloantibodies in the recipient's serum. Consequently, the recipient will forever be sensitized to DEA 1.1 positive blood. If it is a second transfusion of DEA 1.1 positive cells, life-threatening conditions will follow within hours. In addition, these alloantibodies will be present in a bitch's milk (colostrum) and will adversely affect the health of DEA 1.1 negative puppies.

### **Why should dogs be blood typed?**

- Common sense dictates that all dogs should be determined to be DEA 1.1 positive or negative at their first physical examination. It's good medical practice and, in terms of the dog's potential future needs, it is good transfusion practice. Blood type should be known in advance of need.

- All dogs that are first time transfusion donors should be typed for DEA 1.1. Likewise, the first time recipient should be typed for DEA 1.1 so the life of the transfused red cells is not decreased, and its blood sensitized for the future. All recipient dogs that have been previously transfused without having been typed must be typed for DEA 1.1. Donated blood must be typed before administering to avoid causing a life-threatening

reaction in the recipient dog.

- All dogs intended for breeding should be blood typed. Antibodies developed in bitches by sensitization resulting from transfusion of incompatible blood groups must be of special concern to breeders. Since antibodies are present in the colostrum, bitches with alloantibodies to a given blood type should not be bred to a sire possessing that blood group if they are expected to nurse the resulting puppies.

- All pregnant dogs should be blood typed, as well as their newborn puppies. Nursing puppies of bitches with isoantibodies will develop isoerythrolysis and may be susceptible to disease or even die due to hemolytic anemia.

- It's logical -- just as the owner's blood type is known and documented, so should the dog's blood type be known and documented. If a dog is valuable enough to register, if a dog is valuable as a family member or companion, it should certainly have a complete medical "passport", including blood type.

[RapidVet-H Canine DEA 1.1 agglutination card test](#)

[RapidVet-H Canine Package Insert](#)

RapidVet-H IC Canine DEA 1.1 (under development)

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