



THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES

Fact Sheet: Designer, Teacup and Hypoallergenic Dogs

Many puppy mills are cashing in on the desire for so-called hypoallergenic breeds, extra tiny dogs or trendy breed mixes marketed as “designer” dogs. Certain terms used by irresponsible dog sellers have no basis in fact or in the history of responsible dog breeding. For example, a study published in *The Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology*¹ found that “there is no evidence for the classification of certain dog breeds being ‘hypoallergenic.’” Many national breed clubs agree. Below is a representative sample of what national breed clubs are saying about these misleading terms.



“Designer” puppies are often mass-produced in puppy mills, operations where breeding dogs live in squalor and neglect.

“Micro” or “Teacup” Puppies

The Yorkshire Terrier Club of America: “All breeders may occasionally have an unusually small Yorkie ... though **no responsible breeder breeds for this trait**. ... Special circumstances often come with extra tiny dogs. They are extremely susceptible to both hereditary and non-hereditary health problems, including birth defects that may go undetected for a long time.”²

Chihuahua Club of America: “Teacup, Pocket Size, Tiny Toy, Miniature or Standard - are just a few of the many tags and labels that have been attached to this breed over the years. The [club] is concerned that these terms may be used to entice prospective buyers into thinking that puppies described in this way are of greater monetary value. They are not and the **use of these terms is incorrect and misleading**. ... The Chihuahua Club of America does not endorse nor condone the use of any of these terms and would caution the [prospective] puppy buyer not to be misled by them.”³

American Shih Tzu Club: “The words “imperial” and “tiny teacup” are sometimes used interchangeably to describe undersized Shih Tzu. In fact, the terms “imperial” or “tiny teacup” should be regarded as what they really are—A **MYTH** often used by **unethical breeders to create a market for dogs that do not conform to the breed standard**.”⁴

¹ “Can f 1 levels in hair and homes of different dog breeds: Lack of evidence to describe any dog breed as hypoallergenic.” *The Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology*. June 25, 2012. Can be found at: [http://www.jacionline.org/article/S0091-6749\(12\)00793-2/fulltext](http://www.jacionline.org/article/S0091-6749(12)00793-2/fulltext).

² “An Important Message about ‘Teacup’ Yorkies” by Gale Thompson. The Yorkshire Terrier Club of America. Can be found at: <http://www.theyorkshireterrierclubofamerica.org/sharedobjects/docs/Teacup.pdf>.

³ “The Chihuahua Is a Chihuahua.” Chihuahua Club of America. Can be found at: <http://www.chihuahuclubofamerica.com/chihuahuau-breed-standard/teacup-statement>.

⁴ “Imperial Shih Tzu: The Facts About ‘Imperial’ or ‘Teacup’ Shih Tzu.” American Shih Tzu Club. Can be found at: <http://americanshihtzuclub.org/imperial>.

Poodle Club of America: “Responsible Poodle Breeders do not promote the sale of “teacup,” “pocket” or “royal standard” Poodle puppies. This is a **marketing ploy to sell the Poodle puppies for increased prices.**”⁵

“Hypoallergenic” Breeds and “Designer” Dogs

The Labrador Retriever Club: “A **Labradoodle is nothing more than an expensive crossbred.** Because the genetic makeup is diverse from the Poodle genes and the Labrador genes, the resultant first generation (F1) offspring is a complete genetic gamble. ... Indeed **Labradoodles do shed.**”⁶

Golden Retriever Club of America: “The Golden Retriever Club of America is opposed to cross-breeding of dogs and is particularly **opposed to the deliberate crossing of Golden Retrievers with any other breed.** These crossbreds are a deliberate attempt to mislead the public with the idea that there is an advantage to these designer dogs. The crossbred dogs are prone to all of the genetic disease[s] of both breeds and offer none of the advantages that owning a purebred dog has to offer.”⁷

⁵ “Purchasing a Poodle Puppy.” The Poodle Club of America. Can be found at: <http://www.poodleclubofamerica.org/all-about-poodles/find-a-poodle/breeder-referral/breeder-member-referral>.

⁶ “Labradoodle.” The Labrador Retriever Club. Can be found at: <http://thelabradorclub.com/subpages/labradoodle.php>.

⁷ “Goldendoodles.” The Golden Retriever Club of America. Can be found at: http://www.grca.org/allabout/a_doodle-white.html.