

# TIGHT LIP IN THE SHAR PEI

**Tight lip is a defect which is a disqualifying fault in the standard. The defect is defined by the fact that the bottom lip constantly rolls up over the incisors, sometimes even including the canines, in the lower jaw. It is more or less impossible to draw back the lip to be able to see the teeth in the lower jaw. Tight lip can cause problems for the dog when eating and can also cause bite sores caused by the teeth in the upper jaw.**

A dog with tight lip has in 99% of cases a considerable overbite due to the lip pressing back the lower jaw and not allowing the bite to develop normally during puppyhood.

It is difficult for a judge to form an opinion if the dog has tight lip or not if one has never seen the defect before. The lip has to be examined in the right way to form a correct judgement.



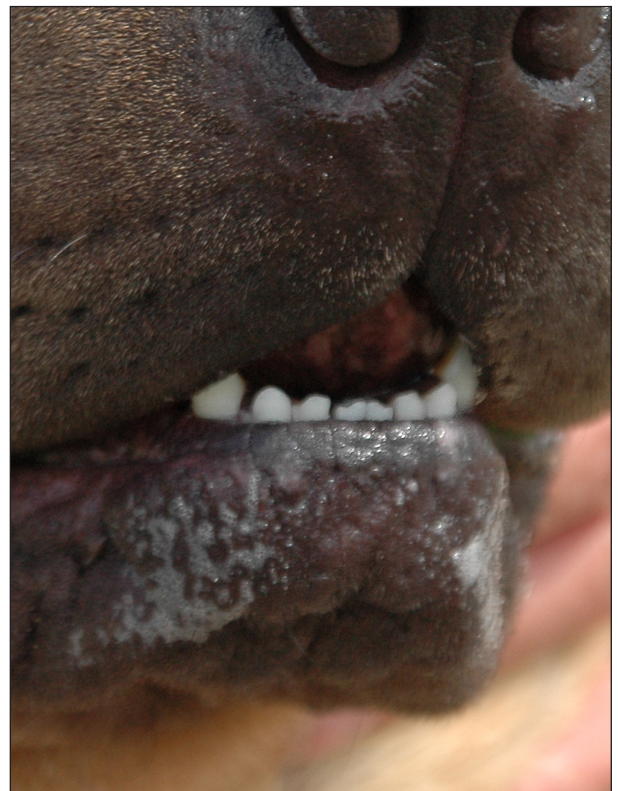
*Dog with tight lip. One sees the rolled in lip and the considerable overbite can be discerned from the position of the teeth.*

## Judging tight lip

When examining a shar pei in the mouth, it is usual that the dog compresses the lips together in the lower jaw and is unwilling to show its bite. This is a normal thing to do for the shar pei due to them having a considerable integrity and they can find it very unpleasant when somebody unknown to them examines their mouth. One can then as a judge wrongly deem that they have the defect tight lip. A shar pei with tight lip never has a correct bite and the incisors can never be seen when the mouth is open from the side, but one sees clearly that the lip is rolled in over the lower jaw (see pictures above). Tight lip is a permanent defect and can not be altered from day to day.

### Instructions in how best to determine if a dog is impaired with the defect tight lip:

- If the dog is standing with its mouth open one can easily see if it has a tight lip or not. Catch the dogs





attention and make it look upwards. If you can see the incisors in the lower jaw, the dog does NOT have tight lip!

- If one wants to physically examine the lip, the best way is to open the mouth from the side and gently pull the lower lip downwards. If the lip feels hard and difficult to draw down, place the thumb between the lip and teeth and gently pull down. If the dog has tight lip, this will not be possible and it is also nearly impossible to be able to get the thumb in between the teeth and lip to enable one to draw the lip from the teeth.

- To see the bite from the front by drawing the lower lip downwards is another method used to check for tight lip. The dog in the picture has a very loose lip and it should be noted that there are individuals with so called "hard" lip, in other words it is difficult to pull down the lip to enable one to see the teeth in the lower jaw, but this does NOT mean that it has a tight lip!



## Incorrect examining methods

- An incorrect method for determining if the dog has tight lip, is to draw the dogs head backwards and open the mouth. Due to the fact that shar peis have rather meaty lips, these will naturally fall in over the teeth, (the same effect for example as when a dog of another breed yawns), causing an incorrect assessment of tight lip!

- By nearing or taking hold of the dog in an incorrect manner, for example by putting ones hand over the dogs eyes, can easily cause the dog to tense itself and in doing this, it may also tense the lips. This will make the examination difficult culminating in an incorrect judgement.

