Background
- Sudden acquired retinal degeneration syndrome (SARDS) is a common cause of permanent blindness in dogs. Dogs usually present with rapid onset of blindness with no obvious abnormalities in the retina; however, the underlying cause for SARDS is unknown and no treatment exists. We are interested in characterizing this disease better with hopes of identifying protein biomarkers and/or the genetic components of this disease.

Participation Requirements
- Dogs diagnosed with SARDS
- Dogs with healthy retinas

Procedures
- Routine ophthalmic examination
  - Dilation of the eyes to examine the back of the eyes
  - Staining of the eye with fluorescein to look for corneal ulcers
- Digital photography of the eye (fundus photography)
- Blood collection for DNA analysis and serum storage
- Electroretinogram (ERG) to measure retinal function

Owner Responsibilities
- You will be responsible for the cost of the ophthalmic exam and all diagnostic tests performed.
- For most dogs, we expect that participation in this clinical trial will last for one visit for the ophthalmic exam, diagnostic testing and blood collection. However, we may ask you to come back for repeated blood sampling. We will also ask you to fill out a questionnaire regarding your dog’s history.

Benefits
- Costs of any complications from the ophthalmic examination, diagnostic testing, ERG, sedation, or blood sampling will be covered by the study up to $200.
- Results from this study will hopefully lead to a better ability to predict the onset and progression of this disease.
- If a gene that causes this disease is found, then we may be able to develop a genetic test to know which dogs have or do not have this disease. Identified, breeders will be able to select against the disease.