

263 individuals responded to the invitation to complete a Whippet Breed Council Health Survey circulated during 2011/12.

The average length of time that respondents had owned whippets was 16.6 years (n = 257, min = 0.5 years, max = 60 years).

Participants currently owned an average of 2.8 Kennel Club registered whippets (n = 257, min = 0, max = 12) and 30.2% (58/192) had bred a litter between January 2005- May 2012, while 69.8% (134/192) had not.

71% (159/224) participate in showing, 18.3% (41/224) in racing, 14.3% in obedience, 13.4% (30/224) in lure coursing, 9.4% (21/224) in agility, 1.3% in flyball and 16.1% in "other". Of these respondents, 73.7% (165/224) participated in only one activity, 14.7% (33/224) in two, 8% (18/224) in three, 1.3% (3/224) in four and 2.2% (5/224) in five.

64.3% (169/263) of Whippet owners said that they did not have any health issue to report, while 35.4% (93/263) did.

58 respondents provided information on litters that had been bred between Jan 2005 – May 2012, accounting for 136 litters. Where specified, 12.3% (15/122) of litters were produced via caesarean section, while 87.7% (107/122) were not.

An average of 6.5 puppies were born per litter (866/136), with a maximum of 12 puppies being born in 3 instances. 47% (401/866) of the puppies born Jan 2005 – May 2012 were female and 53% (453/866) were male.

14 litters were reported to have had instances of puppies being born dead (min = 1 puppy dead per litter, max = 12 puppies dead per litter).

19 litters were reported to have had at least one puppy die between birth and weaning (min = 1 puppy dead per litter, max = 5 puppies dead per litter). The cause of death of these puppies was described in 11 cases (4 cleft palates, 2 lack of oxygen during birth, 1 fading, 1 fluid on lungs, 1 rejected by dam, 1 seizures and fading and 1 severe umbilical hernia).

42 litters had at least one puppy born with retained testicles, accounting for 42 puppies in total (min = 1 puppy born in a litter with retained testicles, max = 4 puppies born in a litter with retained testicles).

263 respondents provided information about 809 dogs, of which 430 were male, 332 were female and 47 were not specified. The average age of the dogs described which were still alive was 5 years old (n=618, min = 1, max = 17, mode = 1), and the average age of those that had died was 11.4 years old (n=128, min=1, max = 19, mode = 13). In 54 instances the dog was not specified to be alive or dead.

Of the 809 dogs, 239 dogs were said to have/have had health issues (121 living dogs, 112 deceased dogs and 6 unspecified). Participants were asked to define these health issues by placing them into predefined categories. The most commonly reported health issues were cardiac conditions (61 dogs), traumatic injury (41 dogs) and neurological conditions (28 dogs). See Table 1 for a breakdown of these conditions.

Data regarding dogs affected by health conditions was broken down into dogs 9 years and younger and 10 years and older. Older dogs were reported to suffer from cardiac, endocrine and neurological conditions more frequently than younger dogs. Younger dogs were reported to suffer from immune and reproductive conditions more frequently than older dogs. The results for this breakdown can be found in Table 2.

Respondents were given a free text box in which they could describe in further details health problems their dogs suffered from. 129 participants described health concerns which had an impact on one or more of their dogs. The described health concerns can be seen in Table 3, along with, where available, the age of onset/diagnosis.

Within the free text box participants reported the cause of euthanasia in 21 cases. Reasons for euthanasia included Cervical Vertebral Instability (pts aged 13), Auto-Immune Haemolytic Anaemia (pts aged 13 and 9), unspecified tumour (pts aged 13 and 3), heart failure (pts aged 12), unresponsive seizures (pts aged 12), lymphangiectasia (pts aged 10), demodex (pts aged 10), hemangiosarcoma (pts aged 7), ruptured cervical disc (pts aged 10), cardiomyopathy (pts at unknown age and aged 9), non-treatable gastric problems (unknown age), aggressive behaviour (aged 3), disc trauma (unknown age), kidney failure (pts aged 16), lung congestion (unknown age), stroke (unknown age), myleofibrosis (unknown age) and unresponsive immune mediated problems (unknown age).

Table 1. Reported incidence of dogs affected by health conditions

	No. of dogs affected	% of all dogs affected (n=809)	% of unhealthy dogs affected (n=239)
Cardiac	61	7.5%	25.5%
Traumatic injury	41	5.1%	17.2%
Neurological	28	3.5%	11.7%
Immune	26	3.2%	10.9%
Endocrine	23	2.8%	9.6%
Skin	22	2.7%	9.2%
Cancer	21	2.6%	8.8%
Reproductive	20	2.5%	8.4%
Eye	17	2.1%	7.1%
Digestive	14	1.7%	5.9%
Respiratory	11	1.4%	4.6%
Temperament	11	1.4%	4.6%
Blood/lymph	10	1.2%	4.2%
Kidney	9	1.1%	3.8%
Orthopaedic	9	1.1%	3.8%
Musculoskeletal	7	0.9%	2.9%
Liver	3	0.4%	1.3%
Ear	2	0.2%	0.8%
Urinary tract	2	0.2%	0.8%

Table 2 Reported incidence of dogs affected by health conditions, divided into dogs 9 years old or younger and 10 years old or older

	Dogs 9 years old or younger (n=572)			Dogs 10 years old and over (n=183)			difference between unhealthy older and younger dogs
	Count	% of all dogs 9 YO or younger	% of all unhealthy dogs 9 YO or younger (n=122)	Count	% of all dogs 10 YO or older	% of all unhealthy dogs 10 YO or older	
No health issues	450	78.7%		72	39.3%		
Cardiac	18	3.1%	14.8%	42	23.0%	37.8%	23.1%
Endocrine	6	1.0%	4.9%	17	9.3%	15.3%	10.4%
Neurological	10	1.7%	8.2%	18	9.8%	16.2%	8.0%
Cancer	7	1.2%	5.7%	14	7.7%	12.6%	6.9%
Musculoskeletal	1	0.2%	0.8%	6	3.3%	5.4%	4.6%
Eye	7	1.2%	5.7%	10	5.5%	9.0%	3.3%
Traumatic injury	17	3.0%	13.9%	19	10.4%	17.1%	3.2%
Orthopaedic	3	0.5%	2.5%	6	3.3%	5.4%	2.9%
Kidney	4	0.7%	3.3%	5	2.7%	4.5%	1.2%
Skin	11	1.9%	9.0%	11	6.0%	9.9%	0.9%
Ear	1	0.2%	0.8%	1	0.5%	0.9%	0.1%
Urinary tract	1	0.2%	0.8%	1	0.5%	0.9%	0.1%
Liver	2	0.3%	1.6%	1	0.5%	0.9%	-0.7%
Digestive	8	1.4%	6.6%	6	3.3%	5.4%	-1.2%
Blood/lymph	6	1.0%	4.9%	4	2.2%	3.6%	-1.3%
Respiratory	7	1.2%	5.7%	4	2.2%	3.6%	-2.1%
Temperament	8	1.4%	6.6%	3	1.6%	2.7%	-3.9%
Reproductive	15	2.6%	12.3%	5	2.7%	4.5%	-7.8%
Immune	19	3.3%	15.6%	7	3.8%	6.3%	-9.3%

Table 3 A summary of 129 participants health concerns, transcribed from a free text box. Some conditions may appear in more than one category.

	Clinical effect/ condition	Number of dogs affected	No. of dogs with onset/ diagnosis information	Onset/ Diagnosis Average (years)	Onset/ Diagnosis Minimum (years)	Onset/ Diagnosis Maximum (years)
Blood/ lymph	Auto immune Haemolytic anaemia	6	4	9	6	11
	Idiopathic haemolytic anaemia	2	1	3		
	Low RBC	1				
	Lymphangiesctasia	1	1	7		
	Lymphoma	2	2	12	12	12
	Myelofibrosis	1				
	Polycythemia	1				
	Thrombocytopaenia	4	2	4	2	5
Cancer	Haemangeosarcoma	3	2	7	7	7
	Leukaemia	1	1	9		
	Lump ns	3				
	Lymphoma	2	2	12	12	12
	Myelofibrosis	1				
	Sarcoma	2	2	2.3	0.5	4
	Spindle cell sarcoma	1	1	9		
	Tumour/ cancer	8	7	9.6	3	14
Cardiac	Bradycardia	1				
	Cardiac ns	4	4	10.3	8	13
	Cardiomyopathy	4	1	9		
	Congestive heart failure	3	2	7.5	3	12
	Enlarged heart	1				
	Heart attack	2	2	6.6	0.3	13
	Heart failure	2	1	13		
	Heart Murmur	36	19	6.1	0.2	15
	Mitral valve disease	2	1	9		
	Pulmonary valve malfunction	1				
Digestive	Anal Stricture	1				
	Anorexia	1	1	4		
	Colitis	3				
	Gastric ulcers	1				
	Gluten intolerance	2				
	IBS	3	1	1		
	Immune mediated Colitis	1				
	Oral ulceration	1				
Ear	Deaf	1				
	Partially perforated ear drum	1	1	9		

	Clinical effect/ condition	Number of dogs affected	No. of dogs with onset/ diagnosis information	Onset/ Diagnosis Average (years)	Onset/ Diagnosis Minimum (years)	Onset/ Diagnosis Maximum (years)
Endocrine	Addisons	1	1	1.6		
	Arthritis	11	4	5.4	2	11
	Cushings	10	8	10.1	8	12
	Doesn't produce pancreatin	1				
	Hypothyroidism	4	3	7	4	12
	Pancreatitis	4	3	8	3	13
	Thrombocytopaenia	4	2	4	2	5
	Thyroid ns	2	1	5		
Eye	Cataract	9	7	8.8	0.5	14
	Conjunctivitis	1	1	5		
	Glaucoma	1	1	11		
	Sclerosis of the eye	1				
	Sudden Acquired Retinal Degeneration	1	1	6		
Immune	Allergy	3				
	Auto immune Haemolytic Anaemia	6	4	9	6	11
	Auto immune ns	1	1	2.5		
	Food allergies ns	1				
	Gluten intolerance	2				
	Immune mediated polyarthritis	5	2	4	2	6
	Immune mediated colitis	1				
	Immune ns	3	2	4.5	4	5
	Steroid responsive meningitis	7	6	2	1	4
	Systemic lupus	1				
	Thrombocytopaenia	4	2	4	2	5
Kidney	Acute kidney failure	1	1	11		
	Glomerula nephritis	1				
	Kidney disease	1				
	Kidney failure	5	3	12.7	8	16
	Kidney infection	1				
		Proteinuria	1			
Liver	Liver disease	1	1	7		
	Liver failure	1	1	5.5		
Musculoskeletal	Back problems	1				
	Cervical disc problems	4	2	9		
	Cervical Vertebral Instability	1				
	Vertebral disc disease	1				
	Lameness	3	1	5		
	Musculoskeletal ns	1	1	7		
	Neck pain	1	1	8		
	Painful joints	1				
	Spinal infarction	1	1	7		

	Clinical effect/ condition	Number of dogs affected	No. of dogs with onset/ diagnosis information	Onset/ Diagnosis Average (years)	Onset/ Diagnosis Minimum (years)	Onset/ Diagnosis Maximum (years)
Neurological	Canine Vestibular Syndrome	1	1	13		
	Dementia	1				
	Epilepsy	7	5	6.6	3	14
	Neurological	30				
	Strokes	7	3	10.3	6	13
	Tripping/ dragging front feet	2	2	10.5	9	12
Orthopaedic	Back problems	1				
	Orthopaedic ns	8				
Reproductive	Cryptochid	6				
	C-section	3				
	Cystitis	1				
	Mastitis	1				
	No low Sperm count	2	2	6	2	10
	Phantom pregnancies	1				
	Pyometra	2	1	4		
	Shrinking testicles	1				
Respiratory	Aspiration pneumonia	1	1	8		
	Chronic respiratory ns	3	3	4.3	3	5
	Inflammatory rhinitis	2	2	9	8	10
	Kennel Cough	0				
	Lung function	1				
	Lung infection	1	1	1.2		
	Pulmonary Oedema	2				
	Respiratory ns	1	1	12		
Skin	Alopecia	1				
	Corns	3	1	3		
	Demodex	1				
	Eczema	1				
	Folliculitis	1				
	Furunculosis	1				
	Histiocytoma	2	1	11		
	Lump ns	3				
	Perianal dermatitis	1				
	Perianal fistulas	1				
	Pyoderma	2	2	1		
	Sarcoma	2	2	2.3	0.5	4
	Skin allergies	2				
	Skin blistering	2				
Skin ns	3					
Miscellaneous	Enlarged prostate gland	2				
	Infection	2				
	Lump ns	3				
	Nervous temperament	2				

	Pyrexia	1				
	Urinary Tract infections	1	1	4		