

Report from the Kennel Club/
British Small Animal Veterinary Association
Scientific Committee

Summary results of the
Purebred Dog Health Survey
for Dalmatians

Warning: The results of this survey and particularly the breed-specific analyses should be interpreted with caution. The overall response rate was only 24% with breed-specific response rates from 4.5% to 64.7%.

Dalmatians

A total of 686 forms were sent out and 210 were returned, representing 452 live dogs. This breed had a 30.6% response rate (210/686) and it represented 1.53% of all returns (210/13,741).

Mortality data

A total of 199 deaths were reported and this represents 1.25% of all deaths reported in the survey (199/15,881). The median age at death for Dalmatians was 12 years and 6 months (min = 2 months, max = 17 years) and this was higher than the overall median of 11 years and 3 months (Figure 1). Table 1 shows the causes of death for Dalmatians. Age at death is presented for the most common causes of death (Figure 2).

Table 1. Causes of death by organ system/category for Dalmatians.

Cause of death	N	%	Most common specific causes in descending order
1 Old age	54	27.1	Old age & old age combinations
2 Cancer	38	19.1	Liver; unspecified; lymphoma; spine; leukaemia
3 Neurologic	18	9.0	Seizures; IVDD; spondylitis; spinal disease unspecified
4 Cardiac	13	6.5	Attack; failure; cardiomyopathy
5 Gastrointestinal	12	6.0	Gastric dilatation/volvulus (GDV); pancreatitis
6 Other	11	5.5	Weakness or paresis; unspecified
7 Urologic	10	5.0	Kidney failure chronic > acute; incontinence
8 Cerebral vascular	8	4.0	Stroke or cerebral vascular accident
9 Combinations	5	2.5	Senility; incontinence; arthritis; multiple organ failure
10 Hepatic	5	2.5	Liver failure chronic > acute
11 Musculoskeletal	5	2.5	Arthritis
12 Unknown	5	2.5	
13 Perioperative	3	1.5	
14 Trauma	3	1.5	Road traffic accident
15 Behaviour	2	1.0	Aggression
16 Poisoning	2	1.0	
17 Collapse	1	0.5	
18 Died	1	0.5	Natural causes
19 Internal bleeding	1	0.5	
20 Senility	1	0.5	
21 Sudden death	1	0.5	
Total	199	100.0	

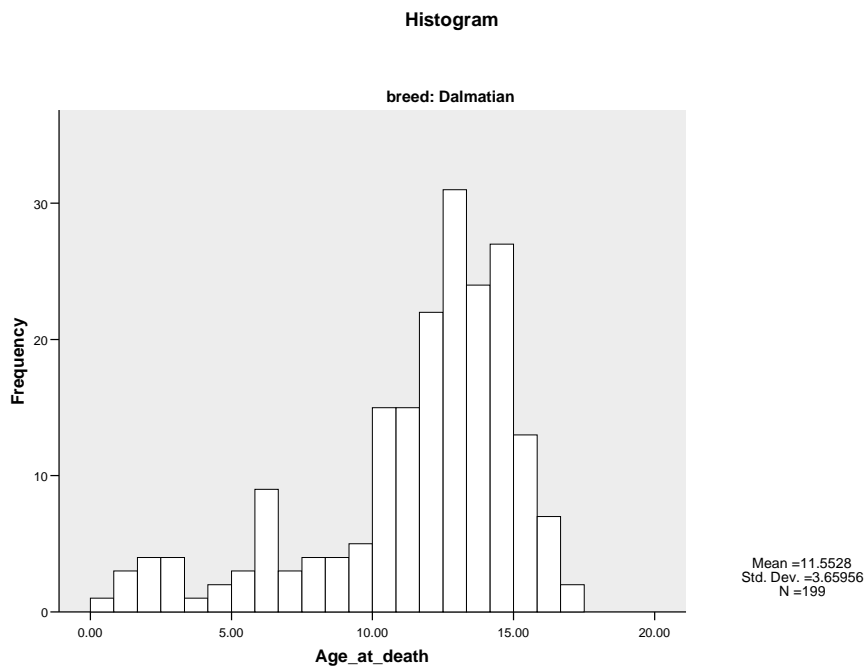


Figure 1. Histogram showing the frequency (as number of dogs) of age at death (in years) for the 199 Dalmatian deaths with age at death reported.

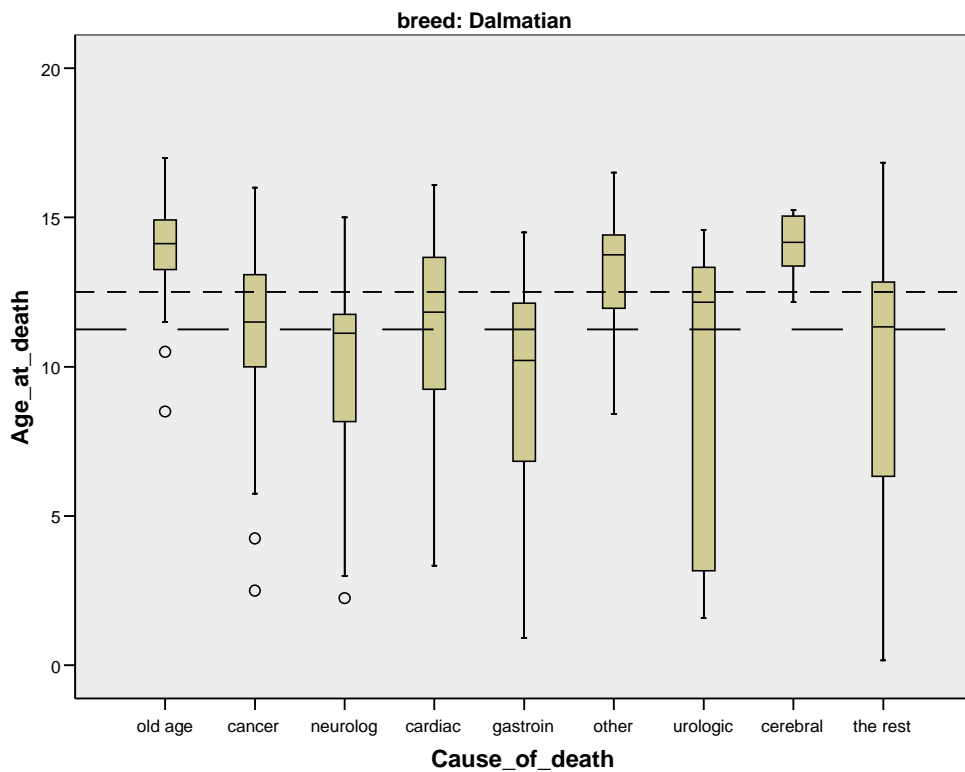


Figure 2. Box and whisker plot of age at death in years for the most common causes of death in Dalmatians (N=199). The dashed line (---) is the overall median age at death for all dogs in the survey and the dotted line (----) is the overall median age of death for Dalmatians. The solid line within each grey box represents the median age at death from the condition.

Morbidity data

The median current age of the 451 live dogs with a reported age was 6 years (min=2 months, max=15 years and 10 months, Figure 3). Health information was reported for 452 live dogs of which 264 (58%) were healthy and 188 (42%) had at least one reported health condition, resulting in a total of 300 reported conditions with a median of 1 condition/dog (min=1, max=6).

The median current age of all healthy dogs with a reported age (N=264) was 4 years and 6 months (min=2 months, max=15 years and 10 months). The distribution of gender and neuter status is shown in Table 2.

The median current age of all dogs with one or more disease conditions and a reported age (N=188) was 7 years and 9 months (min=7 months, max=15 years). The median age at diagnosis for all disease occurrences with a reported age at diagnosis (N=292) was 3 years (min= 2 months, max= 14 years, Figure 4). Table 3 shows the disease conditions for Dalmatians. Age at diagnosis is presented for the most common disease conditions (Figure 5).

Table 2. Distribution of gender and neuter status for 443 Dalmatians with reported gender and neuter status.

Gender	Neuter status		Totals
	Intact	Neutered	
Female	165	124	289 (65%)
Male	104	50	154 (35%)
Totals	269 (61%)	174 (39%)	443 (100%)

Significantly more females were neutered (P=0.0322).

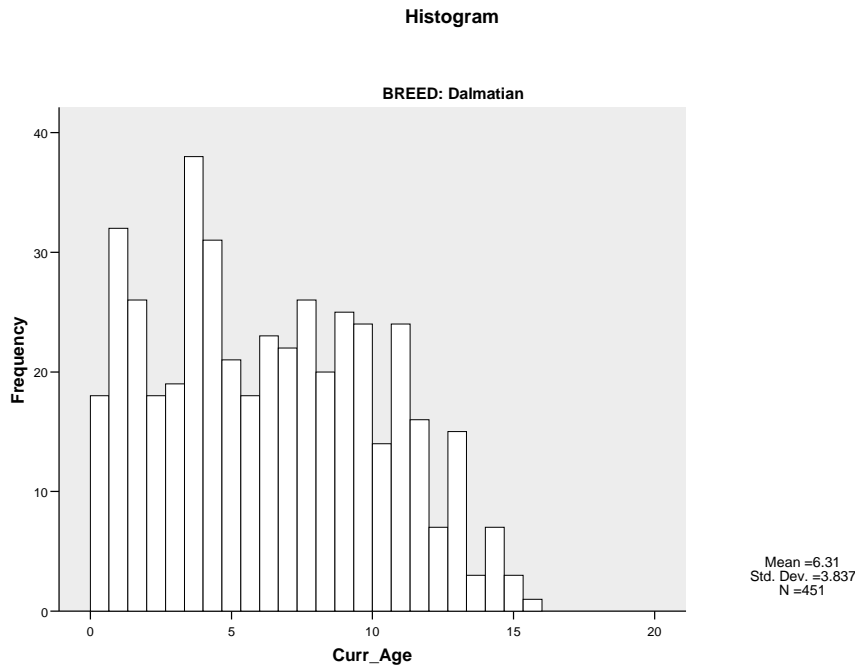


Figure 3. Histogram showing frequency of current age in years for the 451 live Dalmatians with age reported.

Histogram

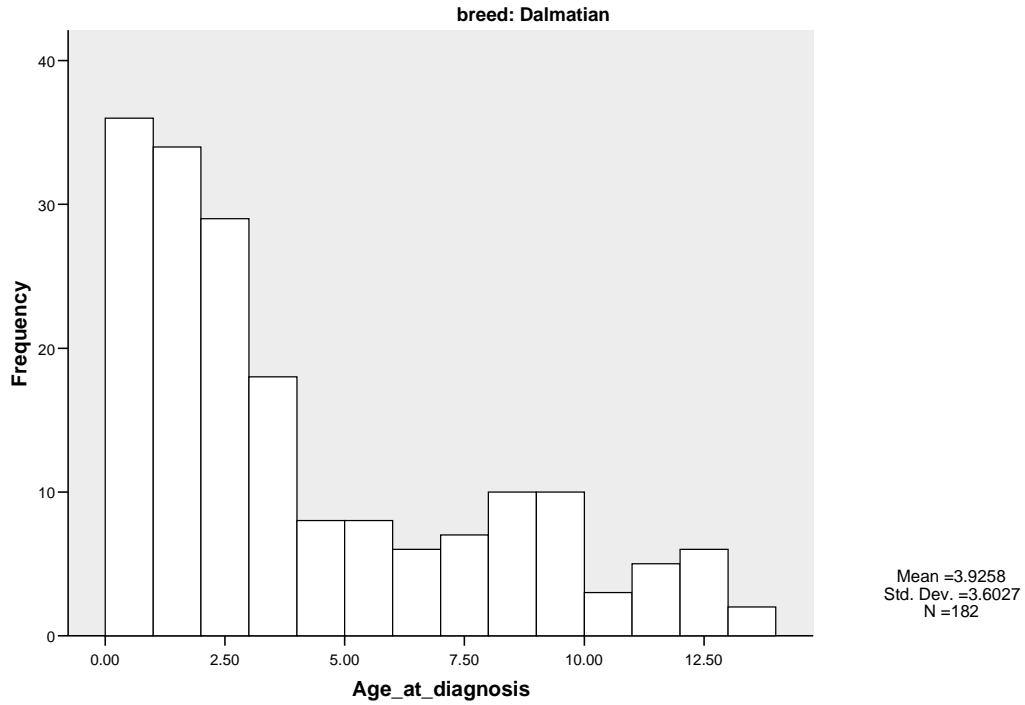


Figure 4. Histogram showing frequency of age at diagnosis for the 182 Dalmatians with one or more disease conditions, using the youngest age at which a disease condition was first reported for those dogs with more than one disease condition or episode.

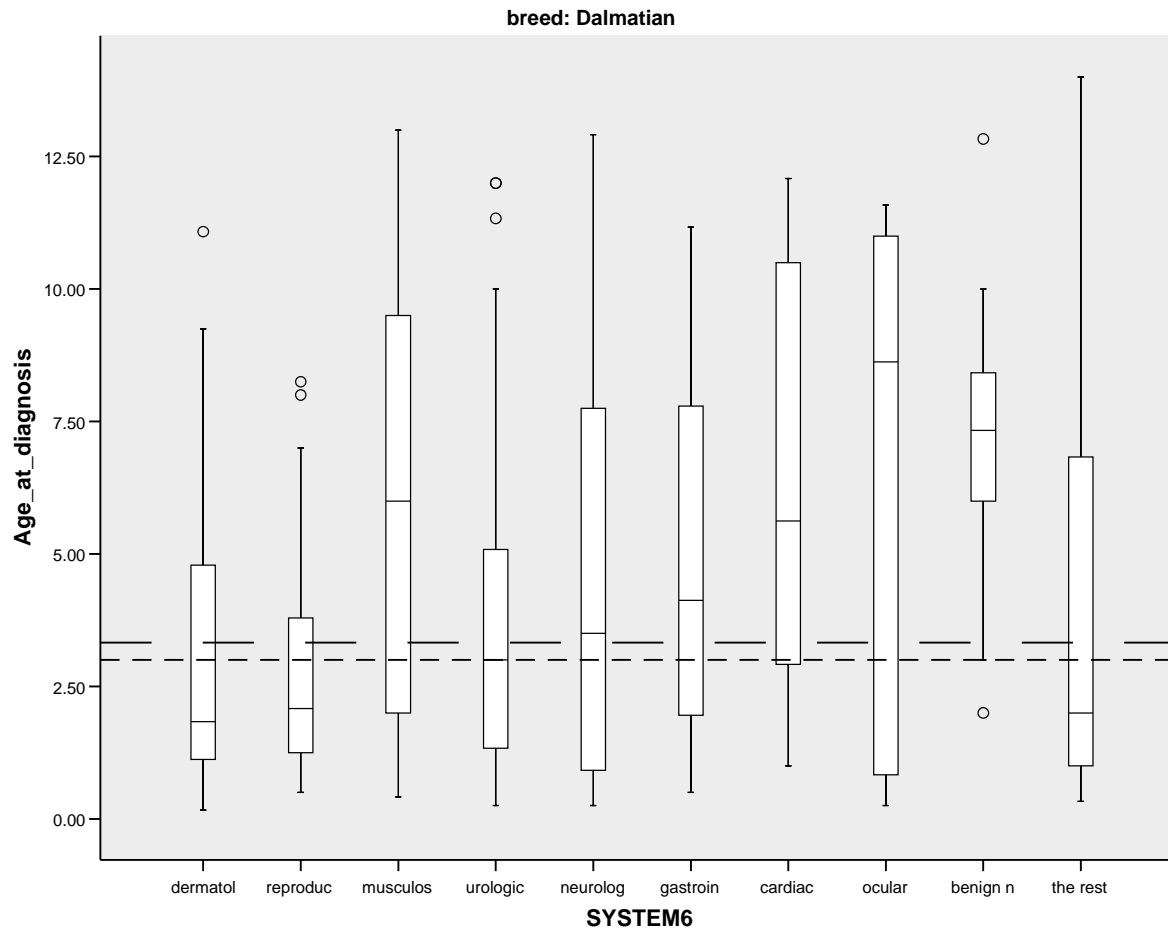


Figure 5. Box and whisker plot of age at diagnosis in years for the most common disease conditions in descending order for Dalmatians (N=188 dogs with 292 conditions with age reported). The dashed line (---) is the overall median age at diagnosis for all dogs in the survey and the dotted line (----) is the overall median age at diagnosis for Dalmatians. The solid line within each grey box represents the median age at diagnosis from the condition.

Table 3. Disease conditions by organ system/category for Dalmatians.

Disease condition	All conditions		Most common specific conditions in descending order
	N	%	
1 Dermatologic	48	16.0	Superficial folliculitis; mites (sarcoptes>demodex); dermatitis; recurrent pyoderma
2 Reproductive	44	14.7	False pregnancy; infertility; pyometra; irregular heat cycles; cryptorchid
3 Musculoskeletal	34	11.3	Arthritis (forelimb=spine>unspecified or other); spondylitis; lameness (forelimb>other)
4 Urologic	32	10.7	Incontinence (unspecified>after spay); cystouroliths (urate); cystitis
5 Neurologic	22	7.3	Seizures; deafness; IVDD
6 Gastrointestinal	20	6.7	Colitis; diarrhoea; vomiting; GDV
7 Immune mediated	15	5.0	Food hypersensitivity; flea allergy; atopy
8 Cardiac	14	4.7	Heart murmur (unspecified>grade 3=without clinical signs); heart rhythm disorder
9 Ocular	14	4.7	Cataracts; blocked tear duct; epiphora
10 Benign neoplasia	13	4.3	Lipoma; unspecified
11 Aural	11	3.7	Otitis externa
12 Respiratory	6	2.0	Kennel cough; coughing
13 Cancer	5	1.7	Type unspecified (skin=mammary>testicular)
14 Unknown	5	1.7	Undiagnosed illness
15 Dental	4	1.3	Dental disease; retained puppy teeth
16 Uncode and other	4	1.3	Unspecified; polydipsia (undiagnosed)
17 Endocrine	3	1.0	Hypothyroidism
18 Behaviour	2	0.7	Aggression; unspecified
19 Trauma	2	0.7	Hindlimb; spine
20 Anal gland	1	0.3	Anal sacculitis
21 Hepatic	1	0.3	Portosystemic shunt (PSS)
Total	300	100.0	