

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

Summary results of the  
Purebred Dog Health Survey  
for the Finnish Spitz breed

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%.

## The Finnish Spitz breed

A total of 133 forms were sent out and 51 were returned, representing 98 live dogs. This breed had a 38.3% response rate (51/133) and it represented 0.37% of all returns (51/13,741).

### Mortality data

A total of 42 deaths were reported and this represents 0.26% of all deaths reported in the survey (42/15,881). The median age at death for the Finnish Spitz breed was 11 years and 2 months (min = 1 year and 6 months, max = 15 years and 11 months) and this was lower than the overall median of 11 years and 3 months (Figure 1). Table 1 shows the causes of death for the Finnish Spitz breed. Age at death is presented for the most common causes of death (Figure 2).

Table 1. Causes of death by organ system/category for the Finnish Spitz breed.

Cause of death	N	%	Most common specific causes in descending order
1 Cancer	9	21.4	Lymphoma; mammary (carcinoma & unspecified)
2 Endocrine	4	9.5	Diabetes mellitus; Cushings disease
3 Old age	4	9.5	Old age
4 Respiratory	4	9.5	Laryngeal paralysis
5 Cardiac	3	7.1	Heart failure; cardiomegaly
6 Cerebral vascular	3	7.1	Stroke or cerebral vascular accident
7 Combinations	3	7.1	
8 Urologic	3	7.1	Kidney failure (acute > chronic)
9 Gastrointestinal	2	4.8	Gastroenteritis; pancreatitis
10 Hepatic	2	4.8	Liver failure
11 Collapse	1	2.4	
12 Immune mediated	1	2.4	Haemolytic anaemia
13 Perioperative	1	2.4	
14 Poisoning	1	2.4	
15 Unknown	1	2.4	
Total	42	100.0	

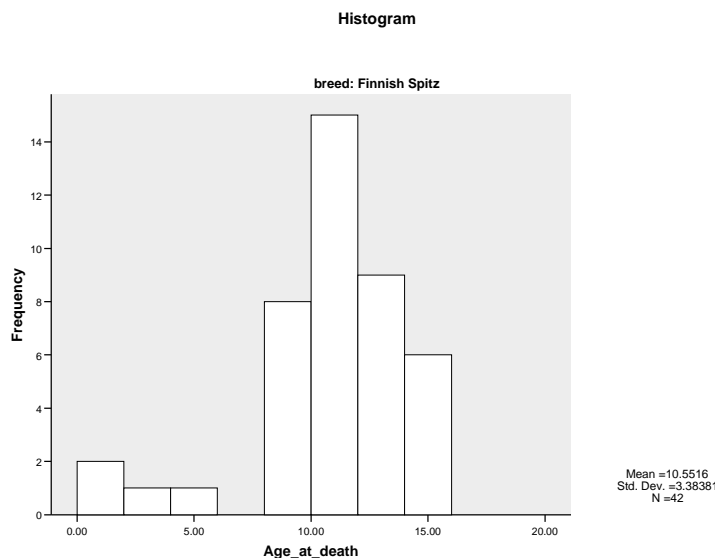


Figure 1. Histogram showing the frequency (as number of dogs) of age at death (in years) for the 42 Finnish Spitz deaths with age at death reported.

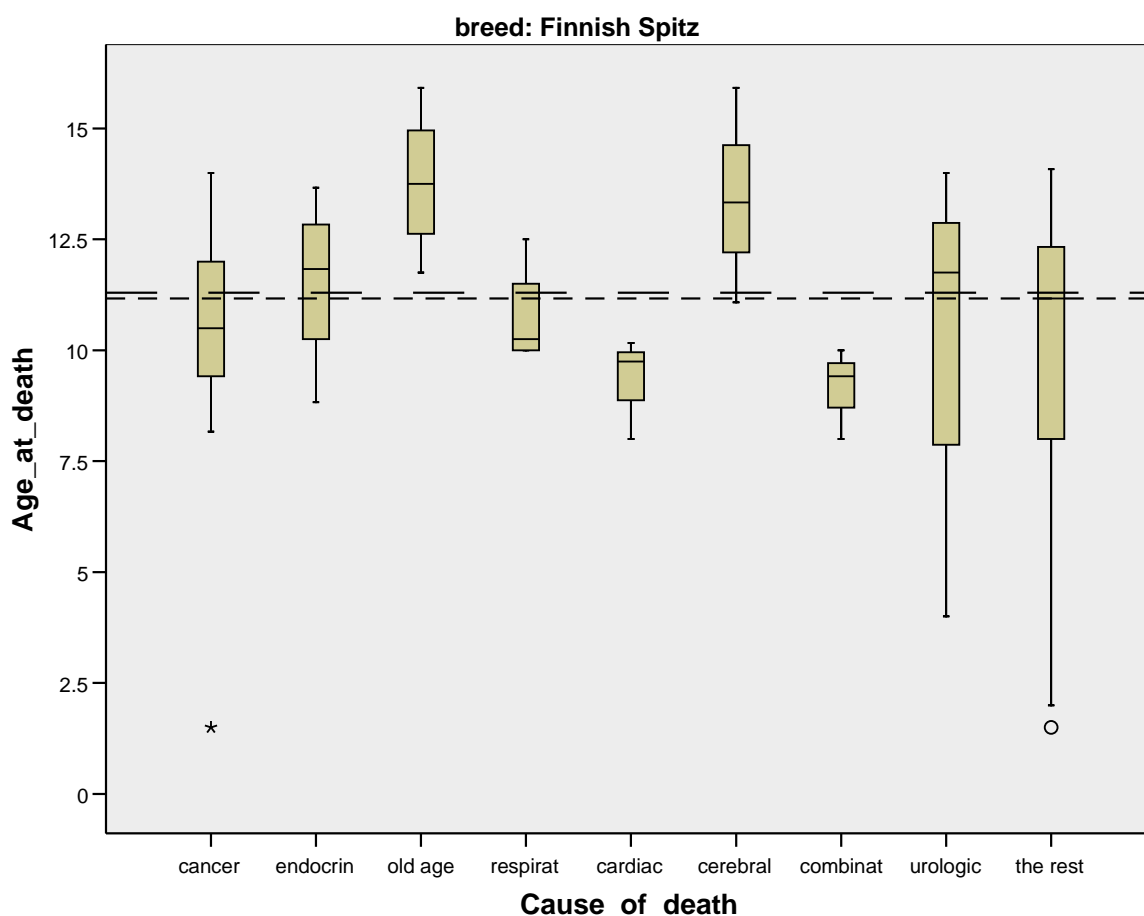


Figure 2. Box and whisker plot of age at death in years for the most common causes of death in the Finnish Spitz breed (N=42). The dashed line (---) is the overall median age at death for all dogs in the survey and the dotted line (----) is the overall median age of death for the Finnish Spitz breed. The solid line within each grey box represents the median age at death from the condition.

### Morbidity data

The median current age of the 98 live dogs with a reported age was 6 years and 1 month (min=6 months, max=14 years and 5 months, Figure 3). Health information was reported for 98 live dogs of which 68 (69%) were healthy and 30 (31%) had at least one reported health condition, resulting in a total of 36 reported conditions with a median of 1 condition/dog (min=1, max=3).

The median current age of all healthy dogs with a reported age (N=68) was 5 years and 1 month (min=6 months, max=13 years and 8 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=30) was 8 years and 5 months (min=8 months, max=14 years and 5 months). The median age at diagnosis for all disease occurrences with a reported age at diagnosis (N=33) was 4 years and 2 months (min= 2 months, max= 13 years and 2 months, Figure 4). Table 3 shows the disease conditions for the Finnish Spitz breed. Age at diagnosis is presented for the most common disease conditions (Figure 5).

Table 2. Distribution of gender and neuter status for 98 the Finnish Spitz breed with reported gender and neuter status.

Gender	Neuter status		Totals
	Intact	Neutered	
Female	36	26	62 (63%)
Male	25	11	36 (37%)
Totals	61 (62%)	37 (38%)	98 (100%)

There was no association between gender and neuter status (P=0.2626).

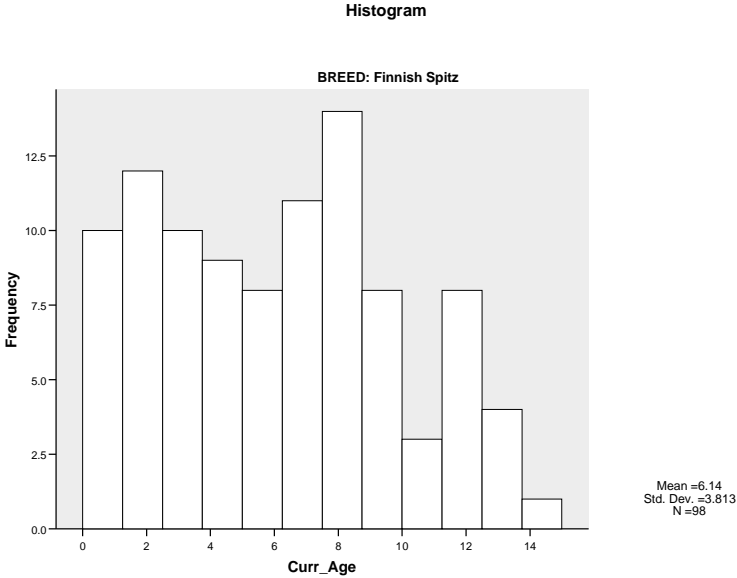


Figure 3. Histogram showing frequency of current age in years for the 98 live Finnish Spitz breed with age reported.

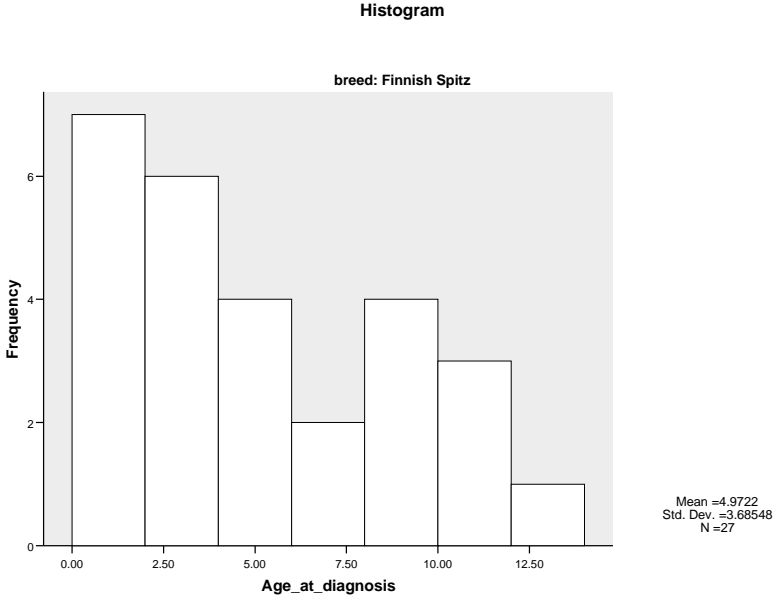


Figure 4. Histogram showing frequency of age at diagnosis for the 27 Finnish Spitz breed with one or more disease conditions, using the youngest age at which a disease condition was first reported for those dogs with more than one disease condition or episode.

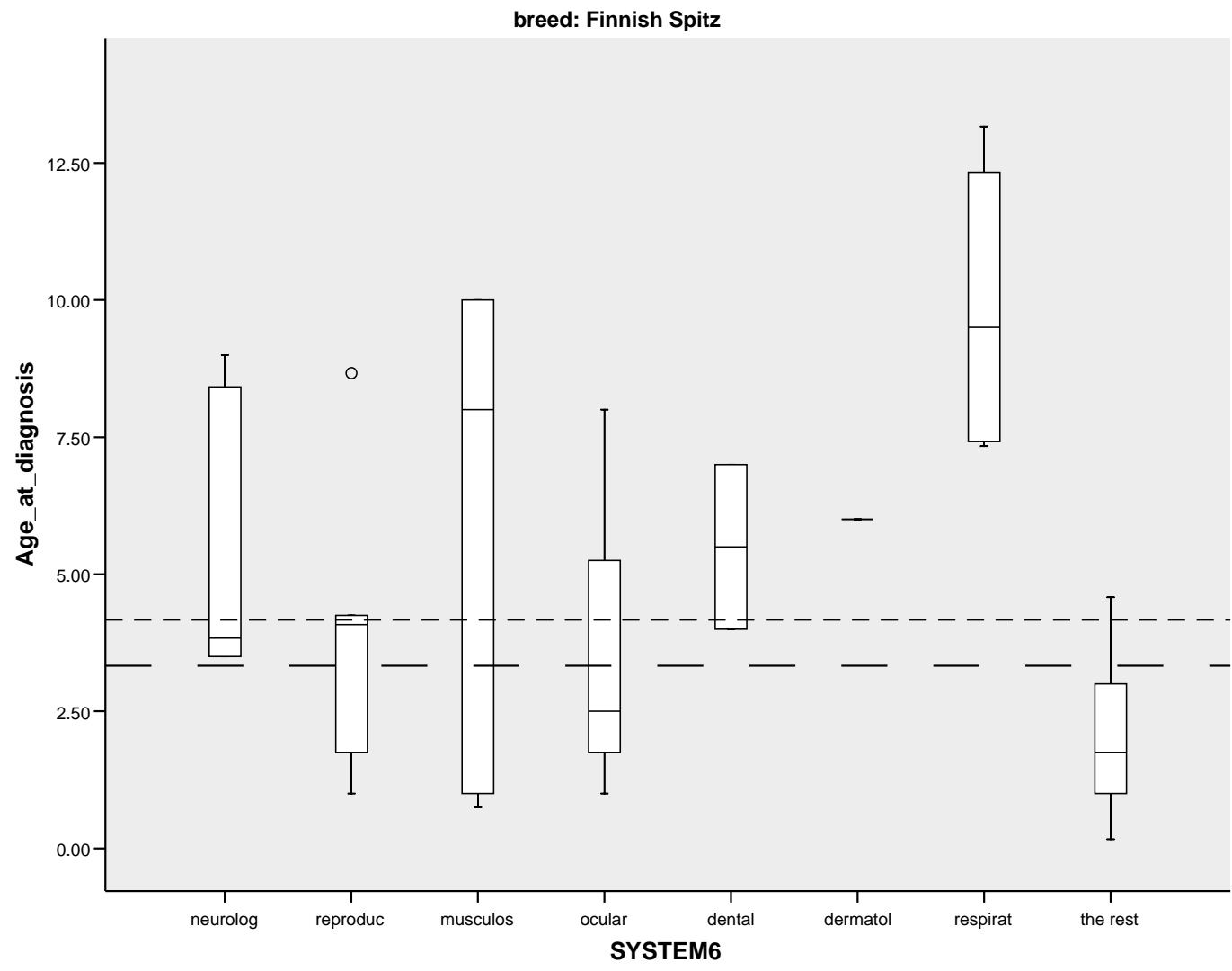


Figure 5. Box and whisker plot of age at diagnosis in years for the most common disease conditions in descending order for the Finnish Spitz breed (N=30 dogs with 33 conditions with age reported). The dashed line (---) is the overall median age at diagnosis for all dogs in the survey and the dotted line (----) is the overall median age at diagnosis for the Finnish Spitz breed. 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 the Finnish Spitz breed.

Disease condition	All conditions		Most common specific conditions in descending order
	N	%	
1 Neurologic	6	16.7	Seizures; IVDD
2 Reproductive	6	16.7	False pregnancy; pyometra; spontaneous abortion; stuck puppy
3 Musculoskeletal	5	13.9	Patellar luxation; arthritis (hindlimb); muscular dystrophy; stiff joints
4 Gastrointestinal	4	11.1	Vomiting & diarrhoea; diarrhoea; vomiting
5 Respiratory	4	11.1	Kennel cough; laryngeal paralysis
6 Ocular	3	8.3	Cataracts; epiphora
7 Cardiac	2	5.6	Heart murmur
8 Dental	2	5.6	Dental disease
9 Dermatologic	1	2.8	Sebaceous adenitis
10 Hepatic	1	2.8	Hepatitis
11 Other	1	2.8	Uncodeable
12 Urologic	1	2.8	Haematuria
Total	36	100.0	