Almost 60,000 dogs potentially poisoned in the past five years

The Kennel Club and the Veterinary Poisons Information Service (VPIS) have released statistics that show more than 56,000 poisons enquiries concerning dogs have been made to the VPIS in the last five years. These enquiries are often as a result of dogs eating items commonly found in the house and garden. To prevent future poisonings, the Kennel Club have released an information booklet for dog owners to inform them of the most common poisonous substances around their home.

The information has been released following the tragic death of Jagger the Irish Setter, who had eaten beef laced with fast acting carbonate pesticides banned in the EU, aldicarb and carbofuran, in his homeland of Belgium, a day after competing at Crufts.

Jagger’s death shone the spotlight very firmly on the issue of poisoning, and the Kennel Club has stressed that the most common cause of poisoning in dogs is due to the accidental ingestion of everyday garden and household items that people often do not realise are poisonous, such as blue cheese, raisins, onions and chocolate.

This new information guide is available to download on the [Kennel Club website](https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk) and a number of these guides can be ordered for free by veterinary practices to pass on to their clients.

Common Poisons Eaten By Dogs (2014)*

- **Painkillers ibuprofen and paracetamol**: 789 cases - 8.7%
- **Rat and mouse killers difenacoum and bromadiolone**: 635 cases - 7.1%
- **Chocolate**: 568 cases - 6.2%
- **Sultanas, grapes, raisins**: 308 cases - 3.4%
- **Xylitol, an ingredient found in chewing gum and bubble gum**: 110 cases - 1.2%

*All stats based on information collected by the VPIS and provided to the Kennel Club.*
66% of veterinary professionals unaware of Kennel Clubs most important online health resources

A recent survey carried out at BSAVA Congress has found that the majority of veterinary professionals surveyed were unaware of the online health resources available from the Kennel Club’s website.

In a survey of 200 delegates, it was found that despite 75% visiting the KC’s website, 66% had never heard of Mate Select, 75% had not used the Breed Information Centre, 63% had not heard of Estimated Breeding Values and 99% had not heard of the Bio-Acquisition Research Collaboration resource.

If you have not heard of any of the resources mentioned, then please take a look at our summary below.

**Mate Select**
Mate Select provides breeders and puppy buyers with an opportunity to look up the health information that is available for each Kennel Club registered dog, including:

- The Health Test Results Finder, which openly publishes results from BVA/KC screening schemes, DNA tests and BAER hearing tests.
- Inbreeding Co-efficient Calculators, which allow users to run the scenario of how inbred potential puppies could be from a hypothetical mating.
- Estimated Breeding Values assess the degree to which a dog may have inherited, or could pass on, genes associated with a hip or elbow dysplasia. These are calculated using the scores for a dog and its entire family from the BVA/KC screening schemes.

**Breed Information Centre (BIC)**
The BIC outlines everything you need to know about a breed, including its exercise and grooming requirements, facilities to find breeders, dog clubs, rescue clubs and information on recommended breed specific health tests.

**BARC (Bio-Acquisition Research Collaboration)**
This initiative helps to improve the way in which information on current canine research is shared. BARC is an online exchange, bringing together researchers, dog owners and veterinarians. Researchers are able to post requests on to the BARC webpage for biological samples, such as DNA from cheek swabs, to help progress their work.

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**Bulldog & Pug Health Improvement day**

Do any of your clients currently breed from, or are thinking about breeding from their Bulldog or Pug? Then why not tell them about the Kennel Club’s Bulldog and Pug Health Improvement day? This series of lectures, held on Sunday 11th October at the Kennel Club Building in Stoneleigh, features talks from researchers and veterinarians on Brachycephalic Obstructive Airways Syndrome, skin conditions, eye conditions and obesity. To find out more about the programme for the day, or to book a place please click here.

Since its launch in late 2013, the Kennel Club’s online research exchange facility, BARC (Bio-Acquisition Research Collaboration), has promoted 22 research studies, including projects carried out by the Animal Health Trust and Royal Veterinary College.

Find out more at www.kcbarc.org.uk

Photo credit: Heidi Hudson/The Kennel Club ©
Idiopathic Epilepsy Research – can your clients help?

Most dog owners and breeders will know that epilepsy is a terrible condition, and with so much unknown about epilepsy, research is essential.

Idiopathic Epilepsy Genetics (AHT)
The Kennel Club Genetics Centre at Animal Health Trust (AHT) is carrying out a study to understand the genetic cause of idiopathic epilepsy in Border Collies and Italian Spinones.

The AHT have previously carried out Genome Wide Association Studies (GWAS) in Border Collies and Italian Spinones with the aim of finding any regions of the genome that are associated with the disease. However, more DNA samples are needed from affected and unaffected dogs to progress the research further.

The AHT and Kennel Club encourage breeders and owners of these breeds, as well as any other breeds or cross-breeds that are affected with epilepsy, to help the research progress by sending cheek swabs samples of their dog(s).

Samples are required from dogs of any age that have been diagnosed with idiopathic epilepsy, and healthy dogs (over 8 years of age) with no history of seizures.

If you know any clients or dog owners who may be interested in assisting with this research, then further information can be found here or by contacting Christopher Jenkins.

Visit www.kcbarc.org.uk for information on other research projects.
Can your practice do even more for dog health?

Want to make a difference to dogs and help improve our understanding of canine health? Why not join up with VetCompass – a not-for-profit research project at the Royal Veterinary College prioritising companion animal welfare?

Every day, veterinary general practitioners examine, diagnose and treat thousands of animals and all this information is stored in their computerised practice management systems. For years, the potential to generate vital information on animal health from these computerised records has remained largely untapped. But now that has all changed. The VetCompass Programme works with UK primary-care practitioners to collect de-identified clinical data that are merged into a single dataset for research that will benefit the health and welfare of all animals. So far, 470 practices (10% of UK companion animal practices) have shared data on over 4 million animals including 2 million dogs and 1.3 million cats, making VetCompass by far the largest companion animal health resource for research in the UK.

Participation in VetCompass contributes to important research that adds substantially to evidence based veterinary medicine. VetCompass research is presented as peer-reviewed publications, posters (See infographic next to text) and also interactive online tools; all these can be viewed on the VetCompass website.

In 2014, the Kennel Club Charitable Trust (KCCT) demonstrated its commitment to the VetCompass Programme by providing funding support of £185,000 over the following three years.

To find out more about VetCompass, its published research to date, or how your practice can help contribute to this research, please click here.

[Infographic produced by VetCompass. Additional VetCompass infographics can be found here.]
New Online Pet Health Information hub

Want to point your dog owning clients towards a reliable resource on common canine health problems? The Kennel Club have recently launched a new Pet Health Information area on its website, with the aim of helping owners find out more about common health problems that could affect their dogs.

These articles have been written by veterinary experts on a wide range of topics, including anal gland impaction, obesity, poisons, grass seed injuries and pyometra, to name a few.

The number of articles in this new section will continue to grow. After the initial launch of the information hub, the Kennel Club will use data gathered from the VetCompass project (see previous page), as a guide to help prioritise future articles that should be included. In a paper recently published by the VetCompass group, it was found that the three most common canine health problems were otitis externa, periodontal disease and anal sac impaction - two of these topics are already covered in the new information hub and the third is currently being commissioned.

Imagine this scenario: A first time dog owner comes in with their Cocker Spaniel with a plan to breed from them. They are concerned about DNA testing and ask you which DNA tests are available for their breed and where they can get them done. Where would you go to find this information out?

A helpful resource for your clients

The Kennel Club’s Worldwide Canine DNA Test List provides dog breeders and owners with the DNA tests available for each Kennel Club registered breed, what laboratory or laboratories carry out the tests, along with an indication as to whether the test is part of the Assured Breeder Scheme (required or recommended testing) and whether it is recorded on the Kennel Club registration database. Since it is a worldwide list, it includes tests carried out by laboratories outside of the UK.

Where can clients find the list?
The list is available on the health section of the Kennel Club website. Click here to view the list.

Does the list change?
Yes - the list is updated every six months. Any updates are discussed with the Health Co-ordinators of each breed before being uploaded to the website. This is to ensure that there is an agreement between the Kennel Club and Breed Clubs with the information provided in the list and to prevent any confusion to breeders about the tests available for their breed.
National Microchipping Month

This June will see the 12th National Microchipping Month take place, giving veterinary professionals an opportunity to engage with their clients about microchipping and the need to keep contact details up to date, especially for dog owners as microchipping for dogs becomes compulsory in England, Wales, Scotland and the Republic of Ireland in 2016.

National Microchipping Month aims to educate pet owners about the benefits of microchipping and the importance of keeping contact details up to date. Promotion of microchipping provides veterinary practices with an opportunity to engage with pet owners about the subjects of microchipping, changes in legislation and responsible ownership.

This year, with your help, Petlog wants to not only promote the benefits of microchipping but the need for pet owners to keep contact details up to date. This can be done simply by checking pets’ details here. Every year Petlog is joined by veterinary practices around the country which support and promote National Microchipping Month, hosting events, promoting offers and communicating with people in their local area, often seeing an increase in footfall and boosting relationships with clients.

At Petlog, we are asking for your support to help us help you, your clients and, most importantly, microchipped pets everywhere.

There are a range of different ways veterinary practices can promote microchipping in practices from videos in the waiting room to posters throughout the practice and starting discussions during consultations. Starting discussions and engaging with clients from now on and answering any questions or concerns dog owners in particular may have in respect of microchipping and the new legislation will help combat any problems in the future, ensuring that clients are prepared and ready for the new legislation and in particular remember to keep their contact details up to date.

How can we help you?

Petlog recently launched its new Find a Petlog Implanter service at the BSAVA congress, enabling vets to sign up and be listed on the new service. The new tool aims to help pet owners and breeders find a local veterinary practice or implanter that uses Petlog affiliated suppliers.

Petlog will provide the tool for free on both the Kennel Club and the Petlog websites, which each receiving hundreds of thousands of visitors per month.

In addition to launching its new service, Petlog is also providing vets with compulsory microchipping guidance notes and supplying National Microchipping Month resources to help drive footfall to veterinary practices.

For more information on the different ways to promote microchipping visit www.nationalmicrochippingmonth.org.uk to receive a free vet pack.

For more information on how to register for free for the Find a Petlog Implanter service please visit www.petlog.org.uk/vets

Did you know?

Of the 450,000 dogs in Wales, approximately 58% are already microchipped.

Order your NMM pack now!
Details about the disease

Von Willebrand’s Disease (vWD) is a bleeding disorder caused by a deficiency of the von Willebrand factor (vWF), a protein that plays a central role in blood clotting. There are two major types of vWD; type I being a less severe form and type III being a highly severe form, with a high risk of spontaneous bleeding, as well as a risk of serious bleeding from trauma and surgery.

Clinical signs

Dogs with vWD are prone to nose bleeds, bleeding from the gums, and prolonged bleeding during heat or after whelping. There may be prolonged bleeding from the umbilical cord at birth or when the puppy sheds its baby teeth. Excessive bleeding after surgery or trauma is common, and may be the first sign of this condition in the dog. You may see blood in the dog’s urine or stool. The clinical effects reported can range dramatically, with some dogs bleeding profusely, while others hardly showing any signs of bleeding at all.

How it is inherited

The disease is described as an autosomal recessive condition. This means that a dog must inherit two copies of an abnormal gene (one from its mother and one from its father) before its health is affected. A dog that inherits only one copy of the abnormal gene (from its mother or its father) will have no signs of the disease, but will be a carrier and may pass the gene on to any offspring.

DNA test for vWD

The Kennel Club started recording results for the DNA test in 1996. Since then, we know the vWD health status of 8226 dogs; 1025 dogs were tested as clear, 584 were tested as carriers, 49 were tested as affected, 6491 were hereditarily clear and 77 were hereditary carriers.

More information

To find statistics of breed specific DNA test results, please see the data presented as part of the Dog Health Group Annual Report.

To find out which breeds have a DNA test available for vWD please see our Worldwide Canine DNA test list.

To look for the health test results of a particular Kennel Club breed registered dogs, please see Mate Select.
Article Summary: Prevalence of disorders in Cavalier King Charles Spaniels

In each edition of the Kennel Scope we’ll be providing you with up-to-date research in areas that may be of interest to veterinary professionals. In this edition, we’ll be summarising the findings from:

**Prevalence of disorders recorded in Cavalier King Charles Spaniels attending primary-care veterinary practices in England. Summers et al. Canine Genetics and Epidemiology 2015, 2:4.**

The full open access article is available online here.

**Background**

Concerns have been raised over breed-related health issues in purebred dogs, but reliable prevalence estimates for disorders within specific breeds are sparse. Electronically stored patient health records from primary-care practice are emerging as a useful source of epidemiological data in companion animals. This study used large volumes of health data from UK primary-care practices participating in the VetCompass animal health surveillance project to evaluate in detail the disorders diagnosed in a random selection of over 50% of dogs recorded as Cavalier King Charles Spaniels (CKCSs). Confirmation of breed using available microchip and Kennel Club (KC) registration data was attempted.

**Results**

In total, 3624 dogs were recorded as CKCSs within the VetCompass database of which 143 (3.9%) were confirmed as KC-registered via microchip identification linkage of VetCompass to the KC database. 1875 dogs (75 KC registered and 1800 of unknown KC status, 52% of both groups) were randomly sampled for detailed clinical review. Clinical data associated with veterinary care were recorded in 1749 (93.3%) of these dogs. The most common specific disorders recorded during the study period were heart murmur (541 dogs, representing 30.9% of study group), diarrhoea of unspecified cause (193 dogs, 11.0%), dental disease (166 dogs, 9.5%), otitis externa (161, 9.2%), conjunctivitis (131, 7.4%) and anal sac infection (129, 7.4%). The five most common disorder categories were cardiac (affecting 31.7% of dogs), dermatological (22.2%), ocular (20.6%), gastrointestinal (19.3%) and dental/periodontal disorders (15.2%).

**Discussion and conclusions**

Study findings suggest that many of the disorders commonly affecting CKCSs are largely similar to those affecting the general dog population presented for primary veterinary care in the UK. However, cardiac disease (and MVD in particular) continues to be of particular concern in this breed.

**Further work**

This work highlights the value of veterinary practice based breed-specific epidemiological studies to provide targeted and evidence-based health policies. Further studies using electronic patient records in other breeds could highlight their potential disease predispositions.

**Canine Genetics and Epidemiology** is a peer-reviewed, open access, online journal publishing original research and review articles relating to all aspects of canine genetics and epidemiology. The Kennel Club Educational Trust cover 50% of the article processing charge for manuscripts published in the area of domestic dog health.

Did you know?

The CGE journal has published 18 open access articles.