

Part I of this series explained that French Bulldogs, Boston Terriers, Pugs and Chihuahuas had the highest risk of difficult birth (dystocia). But what happens to dogs affected by dystocia?

How common is dystocia?

It affects approx. 4% of female dogs presenting to emergency clinics.

How are difficult births managed and what is the outcome?



25% of puppies and 1.7% bitches do not survive problem births.

48.6% of problem births need caesarean surgery.

Breed risks of caesarean section?

Compared with crossbreeds with dystocia: After accounting for other factors such as age, Bulldogs with dystocia had 7.6 times more chance of requiring caesarean surgery.



Conclusion

Giving birth carries some serious risks for both bitches and their puppies. Seek advice from your veterinary surgeon before planning to breed from your bitch.

Findings based on 701 dystocia cases from 18,758 entire bitches attending 50 Vets Now clinics in the UK
O'Neill, D.G., et al., (2019) 'Canine dystocia in 50 UK first-opinion emergency-care veterinary practices: Clinical management and outcomes', *Veterinary Record*, <https://veterinaryrecord.bmj.com/content/vetrec/early/2019/01/23/vr.104944.full.pdf>. (Open Access)