

CONFORMATIONAL EYELID DISORDERS IN DOGS



Natural eyelid position is crucial for proper function and health of the eye surface. Unfortunately, many modern dog breeds are often forced to live with abnormally positioned eyelids: in-turned (entropion) and out-turned (ectropion) eyelids. This extreme conformation can lead to significant suffering for these dogs.

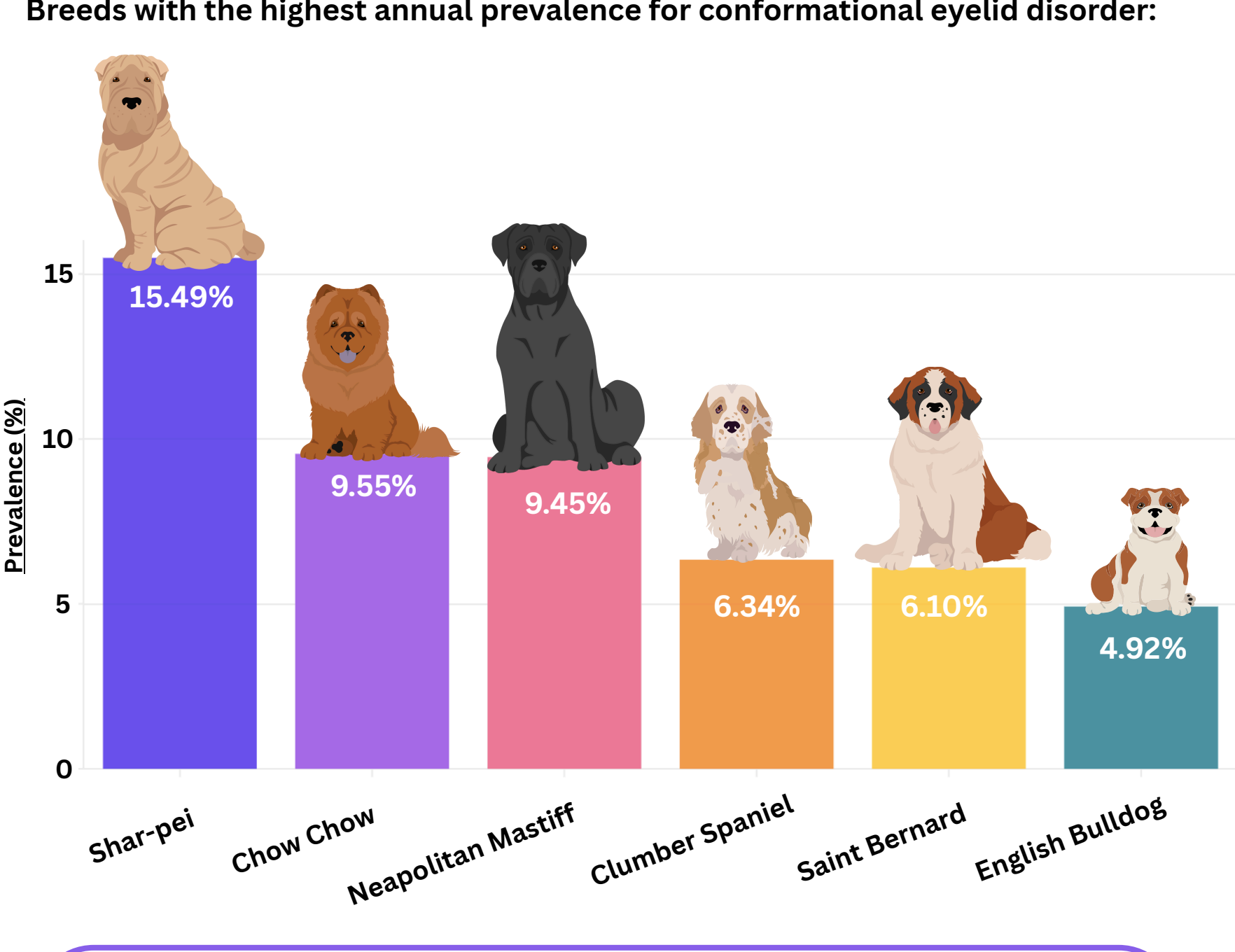
This study reports on the frequency, risk factors, and clinical management of conformational eyelid disorders in dogs under primary veterinary care in the UK.

Study Sample

The study included 2,250,417 dogs under UK primary veterinary care in 2019. The deeper analysis included a random sample of 3,029 dogs with a conformational eyelid disorder (entropion and/or ectropion) diagnosed in 2019.

Across all dogs in the study, 0.36% had a diagnosis in 2019 with a conformational eye disorder (entropion and/or ectropion). Overall, 0.33% of dogs had entropion and 0.04% had ectropion.

Breed frequency

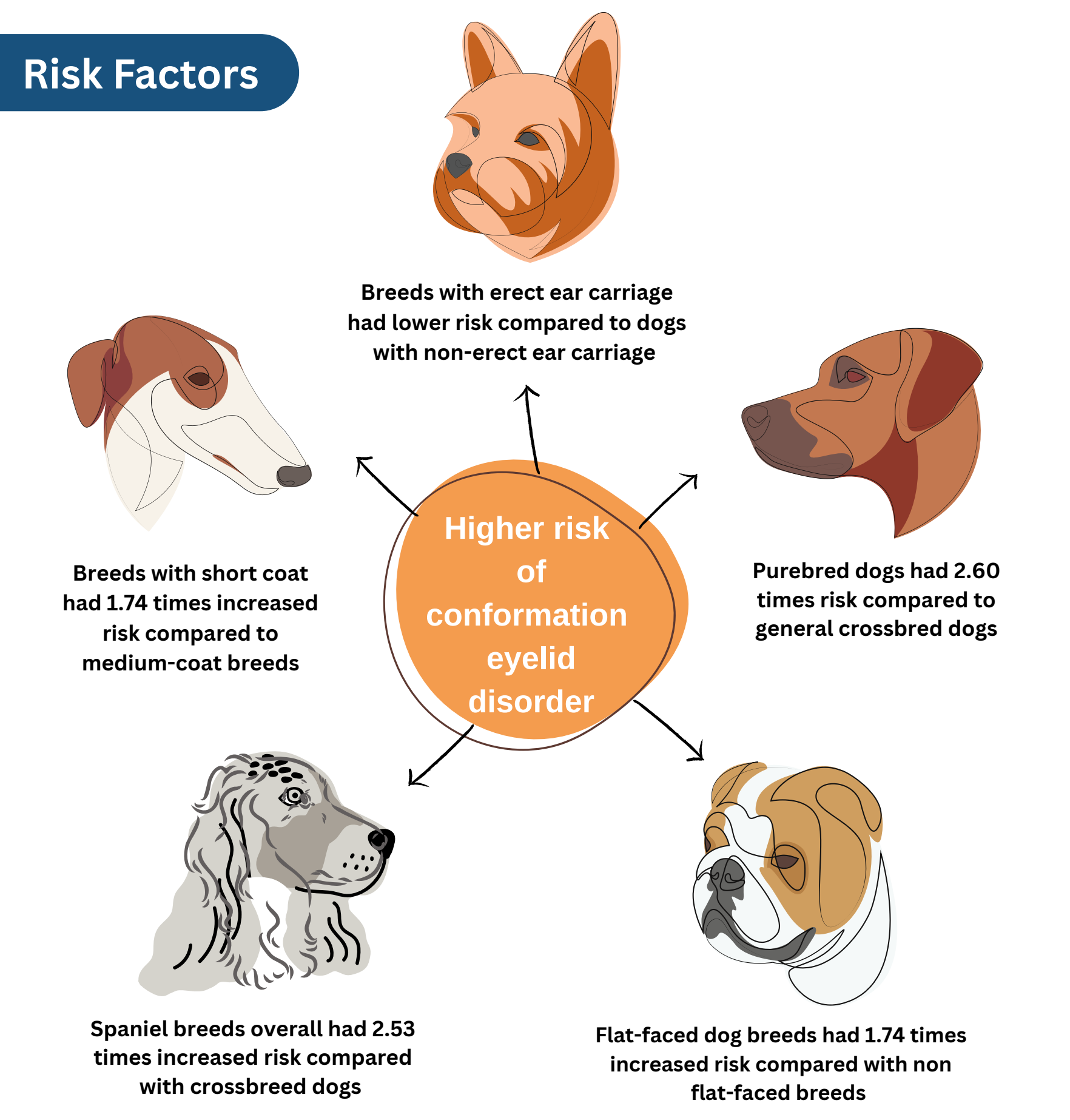


Among 1,540 (67.69%) of entropion cases with at least one clinical sign recorded, the most common clinical signs were ocular discharge (n = 735, 47.73%), epiphora (426, 27.79%) and blepharospasm (353, 22.92%).

Among 167 (65.75%) of ectropion cases with at least one clinical sign recorded, the most common clinical signs were ocular discharge (n = 87, 52.10%), conjunctival redness/hyperemia (46, 27.54%) and epiphora (25, 14.97%).

The most common clinical treatment plan for entropion and ectropion cases included medical care (entropion: 59.4%; ectropion: 60.2%) and surgery (entropion: 57.6%; ectropion: 32.3%).

Risk Factors



Conclusions

Breed-related conformational eyelid disorders are an extreme conformation that promote suffering in dogs and should never be considered as normal or acceptable.

The current results highlight unacceptably high ongoing frequency of conformational eyelid disorders in dogs and provide further evidence for brachycephalism and excessive skin folds as predisposing factors. There is still a long road of change for humans to travel to ensure all dogs can enjoy good innate health.

O'Neill DG, Mustikka MP, Brodbelt DC, Church DB, Vaattovaara V (2025) Conformational eyelid disorders in dogs under primary veterinary care in the UK - Epidemiology and clinical management. PLoS One 20(6): e0326526.

[CLICK HERE TO READ THE FULL STUDY](#)

RVC VetCompass <https://www.rvc.ac.uk/vetcompass> carries out welfare research based on anonymised clinical information shared from over 25% of UK veterinary practices. We are very grateful to the owners and veterinary professionals who contribute to VetCompass research.