

Demography and common disorders in Yorkshire Terriers under primary veterinary care in the UK



The Yorkshire Terrier, or 'Yorkie', was established as a distinct breed around 1865. Although once very popular as a pedigree breed registered with the Kennel Club (KC), the pedigree subset of the breed (maximum body weight 3.2kg) has plummeted almost to extinction in recent times. However, the wider pet population of Yorkshire Terriers that is a larger-sized dog retains some popularity. The breed has a reputation as being healthy and long-lived.

This study aimed to analyse anonymised primary-care veterinary records from the VetCompass Programme to report on the demography, common disorders, and longevity of Yorkshire Terriers in the UK during 2016.

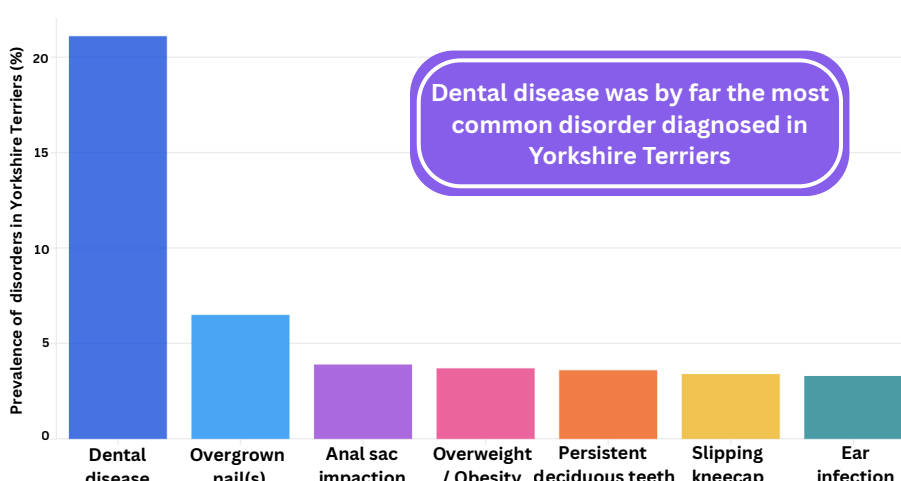
Demography

Yorkshire Terriers comprised 3.10% (28,032) of the overall 905,542 dogs under veterinary care during 2016.

The proportion of all dogs born each year that were Yorkshire Terriers decreased from 3.54% of all dogs born in 2005 to 2.15% in 2016.

The average adult bodyweight was 5.06 kg. Males (5.50kg) were heavier than females (4.67kg).

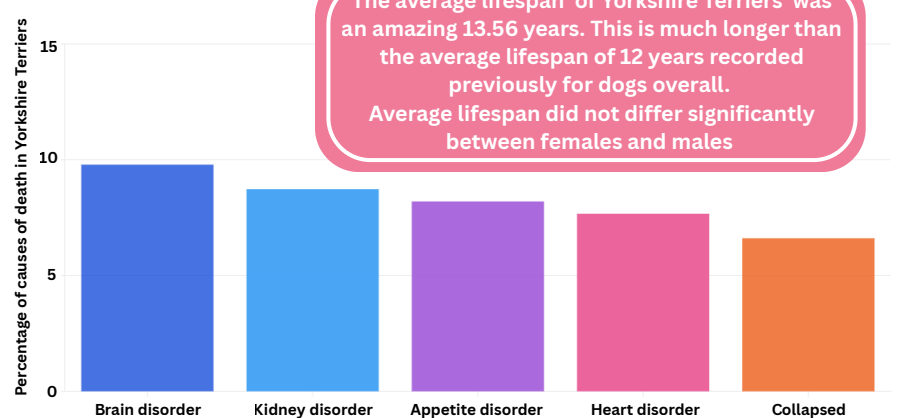
Most common disorders in Yorkshire Terriers



Female Yorkshire Terriers had a greater probability of mammary and skin masses, whereas males had a greater probability of dental disease, aggression, heart murmur, and claw injury.



Mortality in Yorkshire Terriers



Study Conclusions

Although reducing in ownership, the current study identifies that the general pet version of the Yorkshire Terrier is still quite popular in the UK. This may be related to the larger body size of the pet version compared to the miniature pedigree Yorkshire Terrier.



Yorkshire Terriers appear predisposed to dental (periodontal) disease and persistent deciduous teeth. Owners are encouraged to undertake daily preventative home care to improve dental health e.g tooth brushing and to consider feeding specific dental diets to maintain oral hygiene.



This is the largest study to date reporting the overall disorder burden for Yorkshire Terriers based on anonymised EHR data shared from primary-care veterinary practices in the UK. Overall, Yorkshire Terriers have high longevity, suggesting the breed has a robust overall health.



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