

Ragdoll cats in the UK: Demography, Common disorders and Mortality



The Ragdoll is a semi-longhaired cat breed invented in the US during the 1960s and introduced to the UK in the 1980s. The Ragdoll name originates from their typically placid, friendly nature and tendency to go limp 'like a ragdoll' when picked up. However, although immensely popular worldwide, there has been limited published evidence on the overall health of the breed until now.

This study aimed to report on the demographics, common disorders, and mortality of the general population of Ragdoll cats under primary veterinary care in the UK in 2019.

Demography

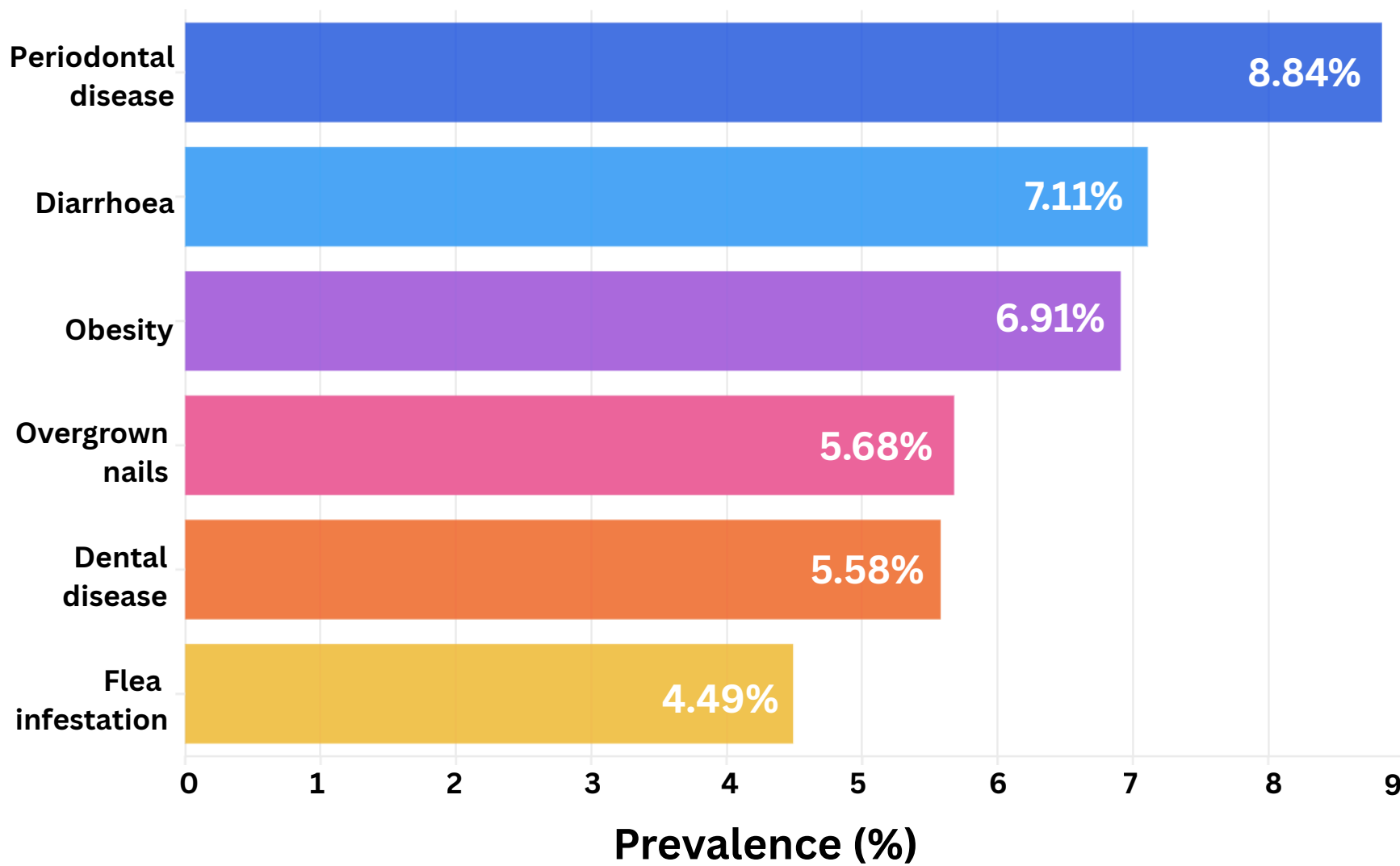
The study included **1,254,484 cats** under UK vet care during **2019**.

Ragdolls comprised **21,358 (1.70%)** of the overall cat population.

Average adult Ragdoll **bodyweight** was **4.46kg**. **Males (4.97kg)** were heavier than **females (3.83kg)**

Annual proportional birth rates showed an increasing Ragdoll popularity during 2005-2019, from 0.70% of all cats born in 2005 to 3.72% in 2019.

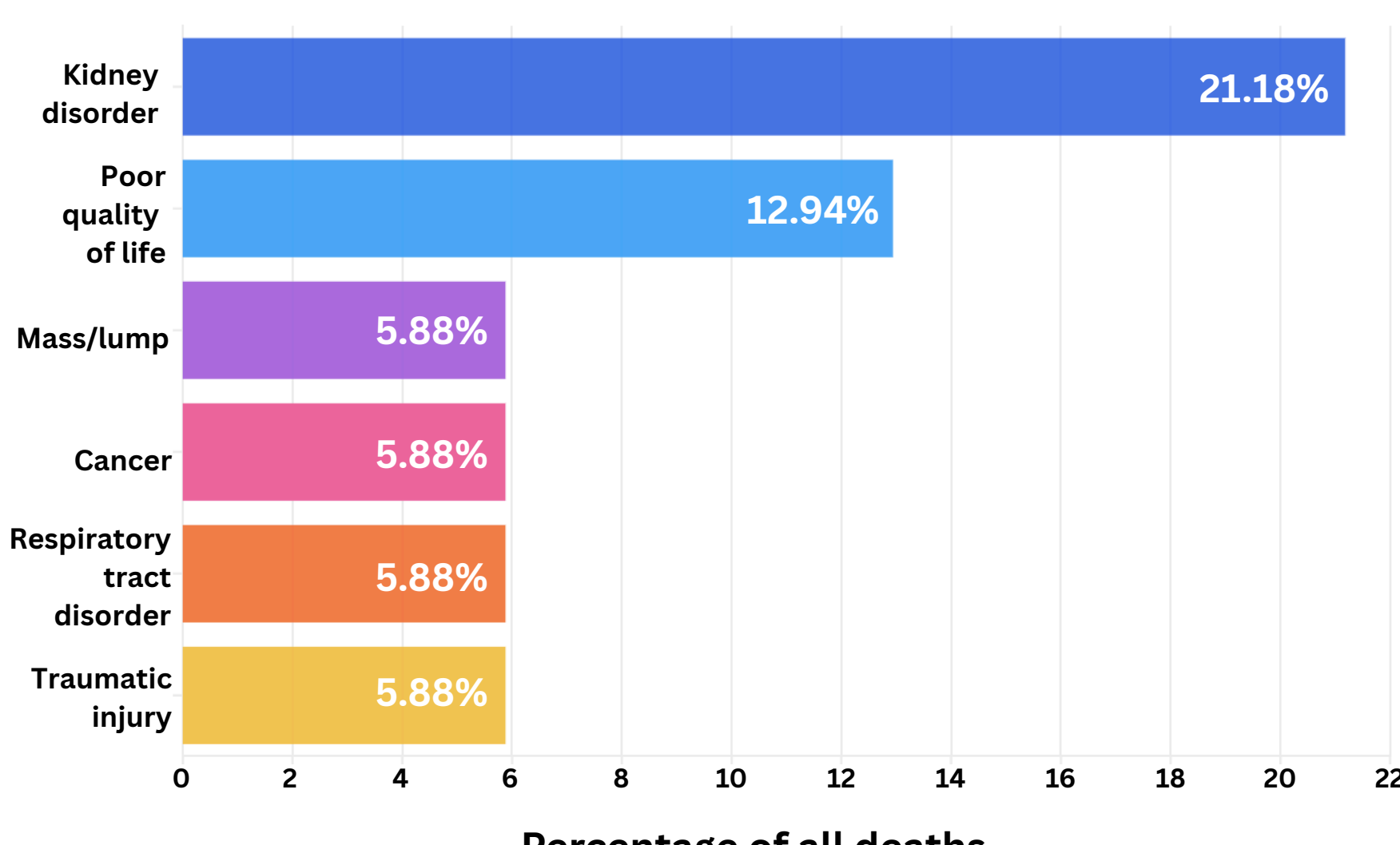
Most commonly diagnosed disorders in Ragdolls



Females had **higher probability** of **postoperative wound complications** and **ear discharge**.
Males had **higher probability** of **obesity**.

Most common causes of death in Ragdolls

The **median age at death** in Ragdolls overall was **12.85 years**. Life expectancy did not differ statistically between females and males. Of the deaths in the study, **91.59%** involved **euthanasia** and **8.41%** died **unassisted**



Study conclusions

Given its high frequency and impact on welfare, periodontal (dental) disease should be considered a priority welfare issue for Ragdoll cats. Owners should seek veterinary advice to ensure good dental health in their Ragdoll cats.



The current study reports the Ragdoll as a relatively common purebred cat breed in the UK and with steeply rising levels of ownership. Overall, the Ragdoll cat breed appears to be largely typical in terms of disorders and mortality for purebred cats overall in the UK.

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

O'Neill, D.G., Bass, O., Brodbelt, D.C., Church, D.B. and Engdahl, K.S. (2025) 'Demography, common disorders, cause-specific mortality and life expectancy of Ragdoll cats under primary veterinary care during 2019 in the UK', Companion Animal Health and Genetics, 12(1), 8

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.