# Diabetes mellitus in cats under first opinion veterinary care in the UK

**Diabetes mellitus is an important endocrine disorder in cats that can seriously impact the quality of life of both cats and their owners. Better information on the frequency, risk factors and survival for diabetes mellitus in cats could help veterinary professionals and owners to detect affected animals earlier and have a better understanding of the likely outcomes following diagnosis.**

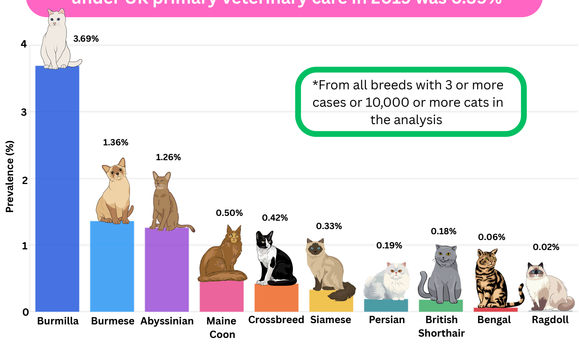
**The current study aimed to provide updated evidence on the epidemiology, risk factors and mortality of diabetes mellitus in cats receiving primary veterinary care in the UK.**

- The study included a cohort of 1,255,130 cats under UK primary veterinary care
- The average age of cats at first diagnosis of diabetes mellitus was 11.8 years
- The average bodyweight of diabetic cats was 5.9kg
- 21% of diabetes mellitus cases were described as overweight at diagnosis

## Annual Breed Prevalence*

**The analysis included a random sample of 1,053 cats with diabetes mellitus.**

**The annual prevalence of diabetes mellitus across all cats under UK primary veterinary care in 2019 was 0.39%**




*From all breeds with 3 or more cases or 10,000 or more cats in the analysis

## Risk factors

**Burmese** (2.07 x risk) **and Burmilla** (8.30 x risk) cat breeds had **increased odds** of **diabetes mellitus** compared to crossbreeds. In contrast, **Bengals** (0.24 x risk) **and Ragdoll** (0.11 x risk) cat breeds had **reduced odds** of **diabetes mellitus** compared to crossbreeds.

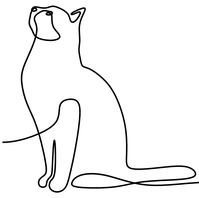
**Male** cats (1.97 x risk) had **increased odds** of **diabetes mellitus** compared to female cats. **Entire** cats (0.85 x risk) had **reduced odds** of **diabetes mellitus** compared to neutered cats.

The **odds** of **diabetes mellitus increased** with age when cats **exceeded 9 years old** (5.11 x risk compared to cats aged 4.5-9.0 years).

## Mortality

The **average time to death** following diabetes mellitus diagnosis was **68** days.

**Euthanasia accounted for 92.7% of deaths.**



**Breed, male sex, neutering, increasing age are shown as important risk factors for diabetes mellitus. Previous evidence on Burmese cats being at high risk is reaffirmed.**

**The Burmilla breed is identified for the first time as highly predisposed to diabetes mellitus, with 8.3 times higher risk than crossbred cats. This predisposition may stem from its origins as a cross breed from Burmese cats.**

**The short average survival from diagnosis in diabetic cats highlights the importance of enhancing our understanding of the clinical, welfare, and human factors contributing to euthanasia decisions.**

**CLICK HERE TO READ THE FULL STUDY**

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