

Irish Setter Health Survey 2010

Health questionnaires were sent to the owners of 2,010 Irish Setters for which the Animal Health Trust (AHT) holds samples of DNA. These samples were originally submitted to the AHT for genetic testing for progressive retinal atrophy (PRA) or canine leukocyte adhesion deficiency (CLAD), or had been provided for research purposes. An initial batch of 539 questionnaires was sent during October 2009, and a further 295 were sent out in February 2010. Of the 834 forms, 212 were completed and returned, representing a response rate of 25.4%. Information was provided for 430 individual dogs, representing 21.4% of the dogs for which samples are held.

Owners were questioned on nine specific health conditions that have been highlighted as being of particular concern to those involved with the Irish Setter breed. These conditions were: gastric dilation volvulus (GDV)/bloat, megaesophagus, pancreatitis, laryngeal paralysis, kidney failure, reproductive conditions, cancer (including leukaemia), epilepsy and hypothyroidism. In addition, owners were invited to provide information on any other health conditions seen in their dogs, and the age at which any eye examinations had been performed. Where named dogs had died, the possible cause and age of death was requested. The opportunity to indicate that named dogs had experienced no health problems was also provided.

Summary of results

Of the 430 Irish Setters in the survey, 106 (25%) were reported to be alive with no history of health problems.

At the time of survey response, 251 dogs (58%) were no longer alive. In 84 of these dogs, death was attributed to one of the nine specific health conditions, while 167 died from other causes.

The specific conditions were considered to be responsible for 179 cases of ill-health. In addition, 61 incidences of other types of illness were reported. Some dogs experienced more than one condition during their lifetime.

A total of 70 dogs were said to have undergone an eye examination. The median age of examination was 4 years and 4 months. Several owners supplied copies of BVA/KC eye certificates.

Cause of death

Eight of the specified health conditions were considered to be responsible for the deaths of 84 of the 430 dogs in the survey (19.5%). **Fig 1** shows the number of deaths for each condition. Hypothyroidism was not described as a cause of death. Further details are provided for each separate condition elsewhere in this report.

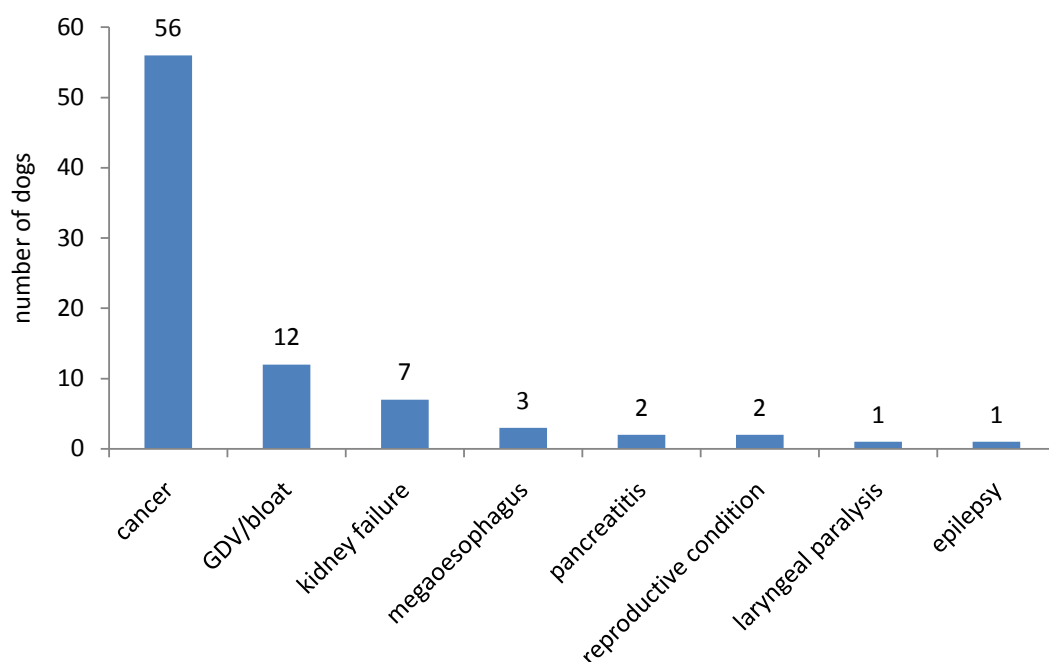


Figure 1 Cause of death attributed to specific health condition (number of dogs = 84)

Fig 2 shows the suspected cause of death in 167 dogs (39% of all dogs in the survey) where death was not the result of one of the nine specified conditions. In many of these cases, owners provided additional information regarding whether dogs had been put to sleep or died naturally (not shown). The median age of death was 12 years and 2 months. The youngest age at death was 4 months and the oldest was 16 years and 6 months.

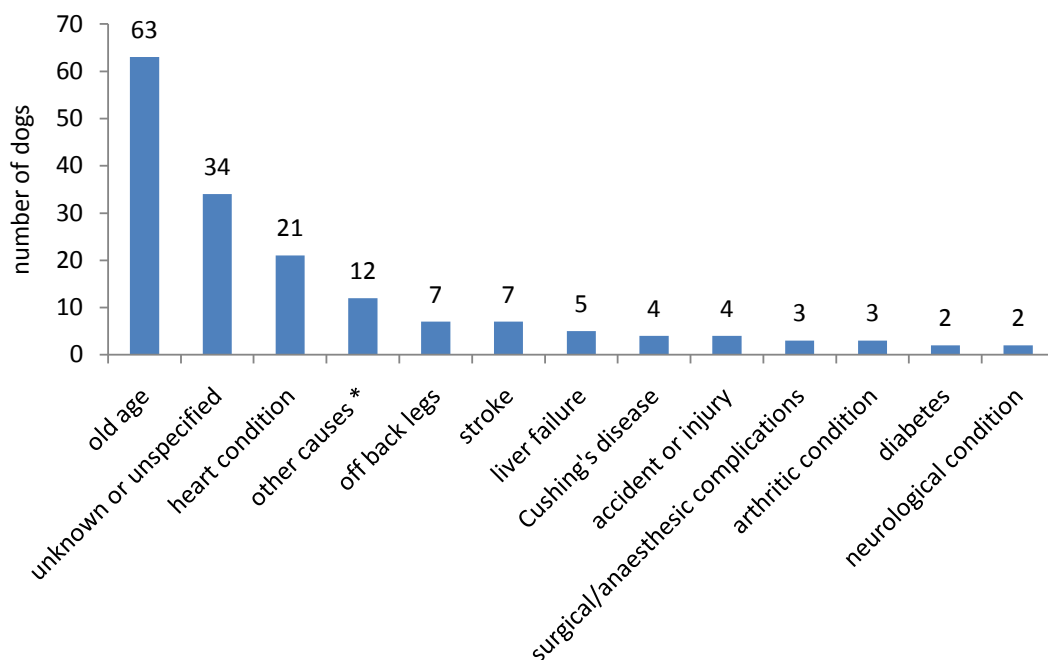


Figure 2 Cause of death attributed to reasons other than the specific conditions shown in Fig 1 (number of dogs = 167)
 * other causes = 1 case each of: blood clotting disorder, brain haemorrhage, hypercalcaemia, incontinence, leptospirosis, myelofibrosis, pleurisy, prostate-related, septic arthritis, meningitis, twisted gut, vestibular disease

Specific health conditions

In **Fig 3**, 179 occurrences of the health conditions of particular interest to this survey are depicted as percentages of the total number of dogs. A few dogs were affected by more than one of these conditions. A more detailed breakdown of each condition follows in **Table 1**. Further information was provided on reproductive conditions and cancer types as listed in **Fig 4** and **Fig 5** respectively.

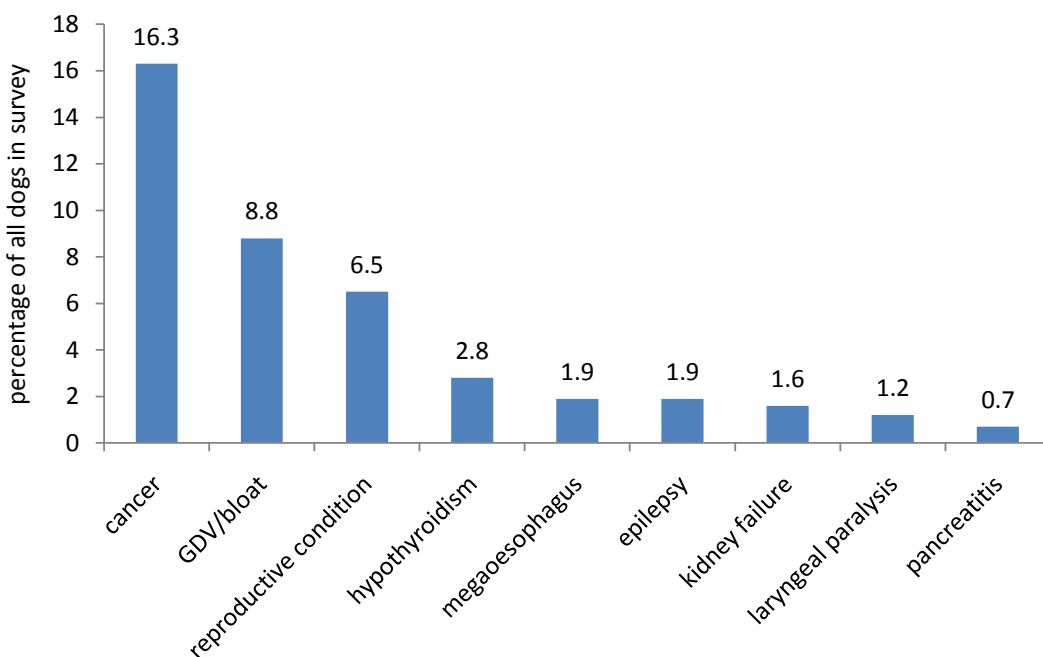


Figure 3 Percentage of surveyed dogs (number = 430) affected by specific health conditions

Table 1 Age at diagnosis of dogs affected by specific conditions

condition	total dogs	death as result of condition								no death as result of condition							
		dogs	age at diagnosis						dogs	age at diagnosis							
			median		min		max			median		min		max			
yr	m	yr	m	yr	m	yr	m	yr	m	yr	m	yr	m				
GDV/bloat	38	12	8	4	3	6	10	5	26	5	11	0	10	10	3		
megaesophagus	8	3	0	6	0	4	0	7	5	0	2	0	1	0	5		
pancreatitis	3	2	10	11	9	10	12	0	1	7	2	7	2	7	2		
laryngeal paralysis	5	1	7	0	7	0	7	0	4	10	1	9	6	10	8		
kidney failure	7	7	11	6	10	0	13	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
reproductive *	28	2	11	2	9	5	13	0	26	7	0	1	6	12	11		
cancer *	70	56	10	2	2	10	14	6	14	9	4	7	0	11	6		
epilepsy	8	1	4	2	4	2	4	2	7	4	0	1	6	6	6		
hypothyroidism	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	6	4	2	0	12	0		
totals:	179	84							59								

* see Figs 4 and 5 for further information

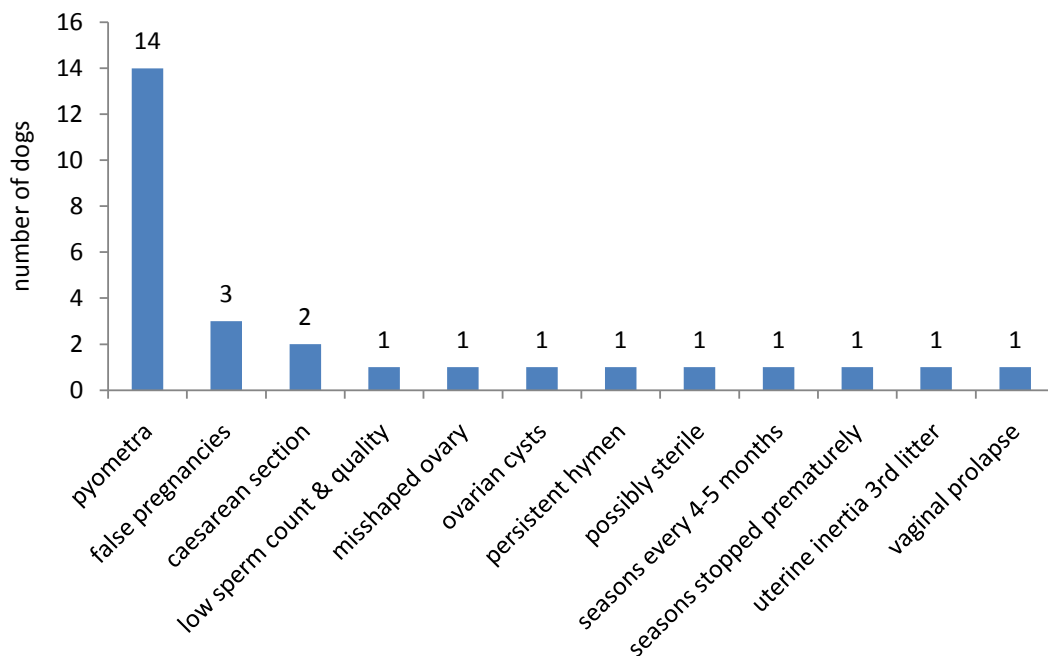


Figure 4 Breakdown of reproductive conditions (number of dogs = 28)

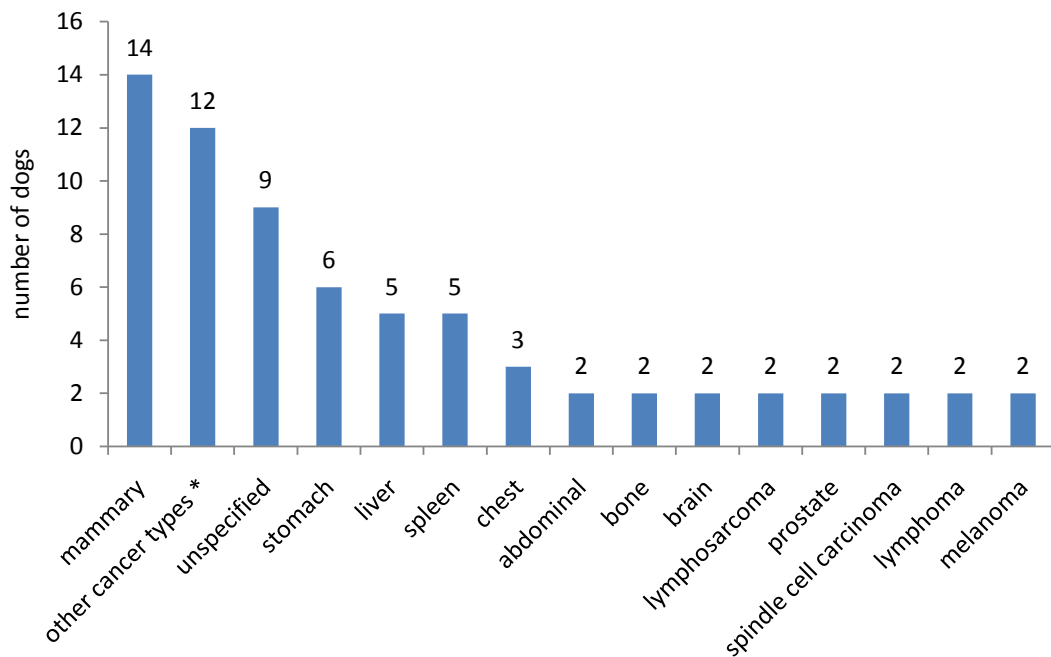


Figure 5 Breakdown of cancer types (number of dogs = 70)

* other cancer types = 1 case each of: anal, forelimb, haemangiopericytoma, heart, insulinoma, leukaemia, lung, mouth, spinal cord, testicular, throat, transitional cell carcinoma

Other health conditions

A number of conditions other than those specified and not resulting in death are listed in **Table 2**.

Table 2 Other health conditions seen in live dogs

Condition	Number of dogs
Cushing's disease	8
Heart condition	6
Osteoarthritis/degenerative joint disease	6
Skin problem	5
Entropion	4
Incontinence	3
Spondylosis	3
Prostate problem	3
Digestive problem	3
Lipoma	2
Cataracts	2
Adverse reaction to vaccination booster	1
Anal furunculosis	1
Chronic degenerative radiculomyopathy (CDRM)	1
Canine leukocyte adhesion deficiency (CLAD)	1
Cystic masses	1
Diabetes	1
Late-onset progressive retinal atrophy (PRA)	1
Leishmaniasis	1
Liver problem	1
Monorchidism	1
Muscle wastage hindquarters	1
Persistent cough	1
Pneumonia	1
Polyp ear canal	1
Pulmonary stenosis	1
Thrombocythaemia	1
Total number of dogs:	61