

The Whole Dog Journal™



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A monthly guide to natural dog care and training

JUNE 2011

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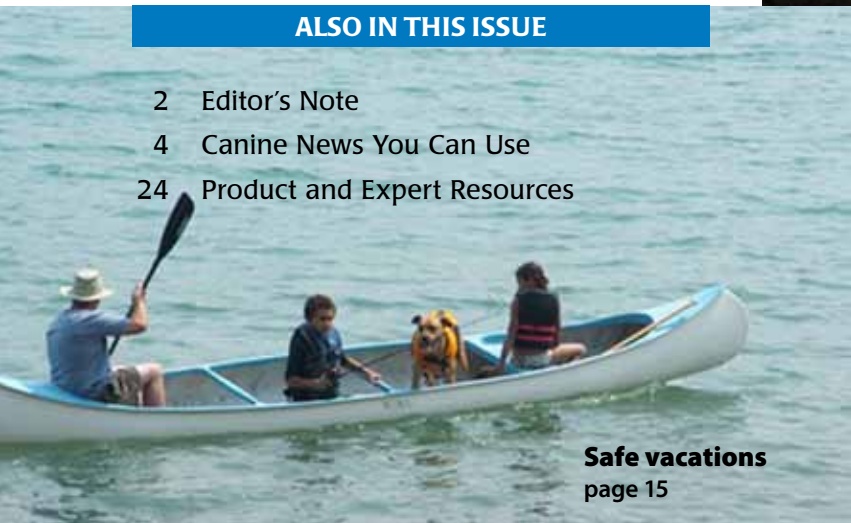
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The Whole Dog



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Not For You?

Don't take me out to the dog park, say some dogs.

BY NANCY KERNS

There were two points that Pat Miller, WDJ's Training Editor, made in her article, "Park It" (on page 6), that resonate so much that I have to repeat them. The first is that at least half the problems seen at dog parks stem from inappropriate human behavior.

Bringing a baby or toddler (or even grade school-aged kids) into a dog park is the inappropriate human behavior I most deplore. When our kids were about 8 years old, a friend took my son, his twin boys, and their dog to the dog park – and then left them all there together while he drove someplace to get coffee. When he got back to the park, he was alarmed to see an ambulance in the dog park parking lot . . . and then *horrified* to see that the EMTs were gathered around one of his sons, while the other two boys stood by with frightened expressions. It turns out that the boys were playing (and probably completely absorbed in their own world) when one of them got *flattened* – knocked to the ground, hard – by a dog who was running by with a pack of big, boisterous dogs. Mike was okay, but he had the wind knocked out of him (and he has asthma anyway), so when it appeared that he couldn't breathe, and the nearby dog owners learned that the boys were there without a parent, someone called 911.

I didn't feel like I had to call my friend onto the carpet (and I'm sure his wife did an adequate job of that!). But I've thought about that incident many times. What if it had been *my* son who had been flattened?! What if one of the boys had been bitten – or mauled? I have to force my mind not to race down that highway of bad thoughts.

It's one of the reasons that I no longer just

cluck and shake my head when I see someone with a small child in a dog park. Clearly, they haven't fully considered the bad things that can happen to even an older, sturdy, dog-savvy kid when a bunch of dogs are whipping around at top speed. "Please, oh *please* take the baby out of here," I've begged some parents, probably with tears in my eyes. They most likely think I'm nuts – but I've seen it with my own eyes: a small child who gets knocked down and starts to scream is like a *magnet* for some dogs. It gives me shivers.

It's not just kids, though, who are at risk in dog parks. Senior citizens, people using canes or walkers, old or rickety dogs, young puppies, and small dogs in a park with a lot of big dogs are also quite vulnerable. In the blink of an eye, they can be brutalized – by accident! – by a flying pack, or in the heat of the moment by an aroused or defensive dog.

Another one of Pat's brilliant points: That dogs are not any different from humans in that it's actually a rare individual who is willing to play and interact with every other individual they come into contact with. And yet many of us expect our dogs to do just that when they get to the dog park. Fascinating.

Check out Pat's advice for structuring your dog's experiences in such a way that he doesn't have to defend himself – and can't help but enjoy himself – at the park.

NK

MISSION STATEMENT: WDJ's mission is to provide dog guardians with in-depth information on effective holistic healthcare methods and successful nonviolent training. The methods we discuss will endeavor to do no harm to dogs; we do not advocate perpetrating even minor transgressions in the name of "greater good." We intend our articles to enable readers to immediately apply training and healthcare techniques to their own dogs with visible and enjoyable success. All topics should contribute to improving the dog's health and vitality, and deepening the canine/human bond. Above all, we wish to contribute information that will enable consumers to make kind, healthy, and informed decisions about caring for their own dogs.

Can't Avoid Noise

Five things to do when your dog is afraid of thunder and/or fireworks.

BY PAT MILLER, CPDT-KA, CDBC

July 4th is still a month away, but in many parts of the country sound-sensitive dogs and the humans who love them are already struggling with the effects of thunderstorms. Our Corgi, Lucy, is a thunder-phobe, and we know all too well the impact thunder and firecrackers have on her (and our) quality of life. Fortunately, the following can make life better for you and your dog during noisy events.

1 STAY HOME: Ever since the mid-1980s, when we shared our lives with our first sound-sensitive dog, Independence Day and New Year's Eve have been occasions to stay home rather than go out and celebrate. You can relieve some of your dog's stress with just your comforting presence. It's harder to stay home consistently during thunderstorms unless you have the good fortune to work from home, but there may be times when you can make the choice to pass on an optional outing if a storm is coming.

2 HOLD YOUR DOG: Despite what you've heard to the contrary, it's perfectly okay to comfort your sound-stressed dog, as long as you do it calmly. If she wants to be in your lap, or next to you on the couch or the floor, let her. If it helps her to calmly put your arms around her and hold her, or do calming massage or T-Touch, do it. This is not operant reinforcement of her fear; it just helps her feel better – and may even work to classically counter-condition her very negative association with thunder or fireworks.

It doesn't help, though, if you are stressed, chanting, "It's okay, it's okay," over and over, while rubbing your dog as if you were drying her off with a towel. In other words, you need to stay calm, too!

3 MANAGE/MINIMIZE INTENSITY OF THE STIMULUS: Reduce the intensity of the fear-causing stimuli by closing curtains to shut out the visual ef-

fects (flashes of lighting, lights, or sparks of fireworks) that your dog associates as reliable predictors of the bad noise.

White noise machines can help mask the sounds; so can the especially composed "Through a Dog's Ear" CDs (throughadogsear.com; 800-788-0949), especially if you have played the CDs during relaxing times so your dog already has a calm, positive association with the music. (If you play them *only* during storms he may form a *negative* association with the otherwise calming music.)

You can also use Mutt Muffs to muffle the sound (safeandsoundpets.com; 443-536-6287). Use positive classical conditioning to convince him that the earmuffs make wonderful treats happen. (Of course, if he is disturbed by the Muffs even after multiple classical conditioning sessions, don't force them on him.)

4 COUNTER-CONDITION: Use CDs of thunderstorm sounds and/or storm sounds (you can find some online at findsounds.com). Start with the volume at *barely* audible levels – or even *inaudible* levels, if your dog is still worried. Pair this low-level sound with wonderful things, such as high-value treats, or games of fetch or tug, until your dog gets happily and consistently excited in anticipation of his favorite things when you turn the sound on. Then turn the volume up *slightly* and continue.

This is a long-term project; don't expect to turn up the volume every session.

This won't fix everything; your storm-phobic dog may also react to wind, rain, and even the change in barometric pressure, but it's a start. When a *real* storm approaches (or fireworks begin) try the counter-conditioning strategy at the earliest hint of stimulus, and keep your dog playing the game as long as possible. When he's too stressed to take treats or play, revert to other strategies. It helps if you're lucky with a lot of near-miss storms that give you conditioning opportunities without reaching full intensity.

5 DRUGS: Short-acting *anti-anxiety* medications can greatly enhance your sound-sensitive dog's quality of life. I give Lucy Alprazolam (Xanax) when storms threaten. It not only helps ease her immediate fears but also seems to have reduced her strong reactions to storms in general.

I can't tell you which drug is right for your dog, but veterinary behaviorist Dr. Karen Overall strongly cautions against using tranquilizers such as acepromazine for sound-anxiety behaviors. "Ace" is a *dissociative anesthetic*; it scrambles perceptions, which may make the dog *more* fearful. If your vet isn't well educated in the use of behavior modification drugs, urge her to do a phone consult with a veterinary behaviorist prior to selecting medications and dosages for your dog. 🐾



If you can't get farther away from a fireworks show, try to at least shield your dog's eyes and ears to reduce the intensity of the stimuli.

PROMERIS DISCONTINUED

Relatively new flea/tick control product to be removed from market

Pfizer has announced plans to discontinue manufacture and sale of its flea and tick control product, ProMeris. Orders will continue to be filled until September 20, 2011.

ProMeris was introduced in the fall of 2007, and touted as the first topical product to use metaflumizone. Pfizer gained control of ProMeris when it acquired Wyeth/Fort Dodge Animal Health in 2009. Pfizer is also the maker of Revolution, used to control fleas and one species of ticks, along with heartworm, ear mites, and sarcoptic mange.

While no specific reasons were given, it's likely that Pfizer's decision was influenced by the March publication of a study in the journal *Veterinary Dermatology* that was done at North Carolina State University. The study concluded that ProMeris "has the potential of triggering a variant of PF" (pemphigus foliaceus, an autoimmune disorder of the skin that will

be discussed in an upcoming article on nose and footpad disorders). Lesions begin at the site of application, sometimes months after the initial application, and may later spread to other areas of the body. Immunosuppressive drugs are sometimes required for treatment. While most dogs achieve complete

remission, lesions may recur in a

few cases even without the further application of ProMeris. Labrador Retrievers and other large-breed dogs appear to have an increased risk for this adverse reaction. It's important for vets to be aware of these findings, to avoid misdiagnosis.

Amitraz, one of the active ingredients in ProMeris, is a monoamine oxidase inhibitor (MAOI). Other products that contain amitraz include Preventic collars and Mitaban. Products containing amitraz should never be used together.

Amitraz can be dangerous when combined with antidepressants, such as Prozac (fluoxetine), or with other MAOI inhibitors, such as Anipryl (l-deprenyl, selegiline). DL-Phenylalanine (DLPA), used to treat chronic pain in dogs, should also be avoided when using MAOIs, such as amitraz. Cats are at risk if they come into contact with topical products, and even owners who are taking MAOIs themselves may run into problems using these products on their dogs.

ProMeris had recently been approved for treatment of generalized demodicosis, also called demodectic mange or demodex

(treatment is not needed for the localized form). Other treatments for generalized demodex include giving high doses of ivermectin (the active ingredient in Heartgard) daily or every other day for long periods, and weekly or biweekly dips with potentially toxic Mitaban. In comparison, ProMeris is far more convenient, requiring only topical application every two to four weeks, and many veterinarians are sorry to see it go for that reason. Owners of dogs who reacted badly to the drug, however, may be wondering why it's not being pulled off the market immediately.

– Mary Straus

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- ❖ Metaflumizone-Amitraz (Promeris)-Associated Pustular Acantholytic Dermatitis in 22 Dogs: Evidence Suggests Contact Drug-Triggered Pemphigus Foliaceus: ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21418349

WHEN BUYING VETERINARY DRUGS ONLINE, LOOK FOR ACCREDITED SITES

Approval offers peace of mind when buying medications online.

Purchasing veterinary medications such as heartworm preventatives online can offer significant cost savings, but how can you be sure that you're buying the real thing and not counterfeit products from China, which can be impossible to tell apart?

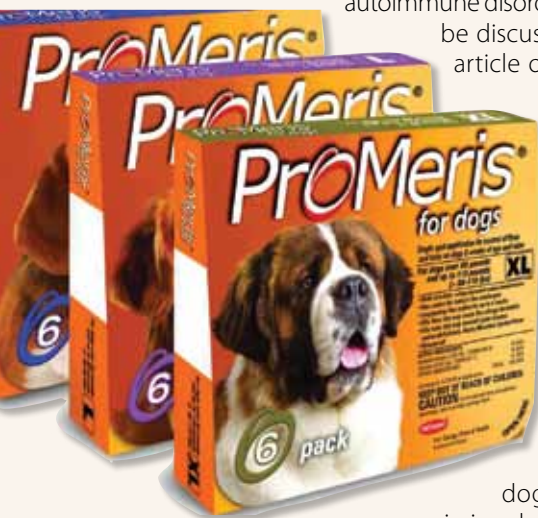
I recently read about a dog who tested positive for heartworms despite being given monthly preventative medications. The reason may be that the heartworm preventative the owner purchased online was not what it claimed to be.

The Veterinary Information Network (VIN) looked into Nuheart, a generic form of ivermectin that claims to be comparable to Heartgard. It is sold over the counter in Australia, where no prescription is required. VIN reported that one online pet pharmacy marketing Nuheart in the U.S. lists a street address in Washington state that belongs to Mail Boxes Plus. That same address is linked to a number of other online pharmacies whose websites are registered to entities that share an address in the South Pacific Cook Islands. None of those companies responded to VIN's attempts to contact them by phone or email.

This is just one example of a widespread problem with drugs being sold on the Internet that may be counterfeit, adulterated, or expired. Warnings abound regarding the dangers of buying medications online. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) states that it "has found companies that sell unapproved pet drugs and counterfeit pet products, make fraudulent claims, dispense prescription drugs without requiring a prescription, and sell expired drugs."

So how can you be sure that "what you see is what you get"? One solution is to look for the Veterinary-Verified Internet Pharmacy Practice Sites (Vet-VIPPS) seal of approval from the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP).

When Vet-VIPPS was first announced in 2009, it sounded



like a great idea. Unfortunately, no veterinary pharmacies were approved at that time, but the situation has improved. A quick search yielded 11 verified online veterinary pharmacy sites. I was pleased to see four sites I've recommended on the list: 1-800-PetMeds, Drs. Foster & Smith, PetCareRx, and National Pet Pharmacy.

Note that these pharmacies will not offer to sell you prescription medications without a prescription. Administering medication without the help of a veterinarian is not a smart way to save money. Mistakes can range from giving the wrong dosage to using the wrong medication entirely, or giving dangerous combinations of drugs. Some inappropriate medications are only ineffective; others could be dangerous or even fatal.

The FDA has the following suggestions for protecting yourself when purchasing pet medications online, using the acronym AWARE:

- ❖ **A**sk your veterinarian if she knows anything about the site you plan to use.
- ❖ **W**atch for red flags, such as not requiring a prescription, not listing an address and phone number, or not having a pharmacist available to answer questions.
- ❖ **A**lways check for site accreditation, such as from Vet-VIPPS.
- ❖ **R**eport problems and suspicious online pharmacies. They suggest reporting any problems first to the manufacturer, and then to the FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine (see www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary/SafetyHealth or call 1-888-FDA-VETS).
- ❖ **E**ducate yourself about online pharmacies.

Use common sense when purchasing medications online; if a deal seems too good, you're likely not getting the real thing.

Another consideration when buying medications online is that the manufacturer's warranty may be invalidated by an online purchase. Manufacturers of heartworm preventatives in particular guarantee products only when purchased from a veterinarian; not even a VIPPS-accredited pharmacy will do.

Fortunately, some online pharmacies offer their own guarantees. For example, 1-800-PetMeds claims that its guarantee is even better than the manufacturer's: it will cover the cost of treatment if your dog becomes infected while taking heartworm product purchased from its site as long as the drug has been used for nine consecutive months prior to diagnosis

(see 1800petmeds.com/guarantee.jsp). Drs. Foster & Smith also offers its own guarantee for all heartworm preventatives it sells (drsfostersmith.com/general.cfm?gid=569).

Many pets need to take drugs that have been compounded, where the drug's dosage, form, or flavor are manipulated to make them work for animals. Compounding pharmacies produce drugs in dosages suitable for small dogs, in flavors that pets are willing to eagerly eat, and in forms such as transdermal, where the drug is applied to the skin rather than given orally. Compounding pharmacies can also be a source for drugs that have been discontinued. Because of their specialized nature, compounded drugs don't go through an FDA drug-approval process, and so are not formally tested for safety or efficacy.

Compounded drugs can be life-savers for some pets, but they can be ineffective if poor quality ingredients are used and deadly when mistakes are made. Twenty-one polo horses died in 2009 after being injected with a vitamin compound that included a toxic amount of selenium due to an error by the compounding pharmacy that made it.

The NABP doesn't list any compounding pharmacies, although Choice Compounding Pharmacy (choicecompoundingpharmacy.com) was recently granted approval. In addition, there's a separate organization, the Pharmacy Compounding Accreditation Board (PCAB), that focuses on this area of specialization. The PCAB was created in 2004 in an attempt by the pharmacy industry to police itself and raise the quality of compounded drugs. Go to its website at pcab.info to search for accredited compounding pharmacies by state.

Not every pharmacy without approval from VIPPS or PCAB sells counterfeit or dangerous products. The approval process is costly and takes time; not all pharmacies can afford it. In the absence of reliable information, however, these accreditations offer peace of mind when buying veterinary medications for your dog from someone other than your veterinarian.

— Mary Straus

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- ❖ To find a Vet-VIPPS online pharmacy, see: nabp.net/programs/accreditation/vet-vipps/
- ❖ Pharmacy Compounding Accreditation Board: pcab.info
- ❖ "Online Veterinary Pharmacies Exploit Cross-Border Regulatory Gaps": news.vin.com/vinnews.aspx?articleId=18361
- ❖ FDA Animal & Veterinary: www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/ucm048164.htm
www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary/SafetyHealth/ReportaProblem/ucm055305.htm





MANAGEMENT

Park It

How to ensure your dog has only good experiences at the dog park.

BY PAT MILLER, CBCC-KA, CPDT-KA, CDBC

Dog parks have gotten a bad rap in the past few years, thanks in large part to articles written and statements made by training and behavior professionals. That's unfortunate, because, while there are, indeed, problems with some dog parks, a well-run facility can be a lifesaver for some dogs.

These days, most dog park administrators understand the need for rules that purport to regulate, at least to some degree, the behavior of the canines and humans who avail themselves of the dog park privilege. Problems arise when there's no one in attendance to monitor the action and enforce the rules. Some parks run well on a peer-pressure basis, but this format often acts only to evict an offender after a problem arises

– sometimes a serious one – rather than screening users in advance to prevent problems.

The majority of official dog parks are municipally owned and operated. I am always delighted to see communities recognize that dog owners and their canine family members are as deserving of a slice of the local park pie as are soccer players and Little League teams. However, very few municipally run dog parks

Ideally, you can find a time when your local dog park is not crowded, or populated by dogs who play too rough or bully others. If your dog's park time is highly stressful for him, it negates its socialization and exercise value.

provide adequate supervision. They put up the fence, post signs with rules, and keep the grass watered and mowed, and that's it. When problems arise, animal control is called, and the issue may or may not be resolved to everyone's satisfaction.

The ideal model for a successful dog park is a privately owned or very well-supervised municipal facility where dogs are screened before being accepted and owners are issued membership cards that they swipe to gain entry through a locked gate. The park should have at least one attendant on duty during park-use hours, to intercede, hopefully before a problem behavior becomes serious, but if not, at least to manage the situation after something occurs.

YOU

Half the problems (or should I say *at least* half the problems) at many dog parks stem from human behavior rather than dog behavior. When you take your dog to a park your primary responsibility is to keep your eyeballs on her and intercede if/when things are getting dicey.

There can be a fine line between two dogs happily playing body-slam and chew-face, and the moment one decides he's had enough and things escalate to real snapping and snarling. If you and your dog-owner friend are drinking wine and chatting with your backs to the action, you'll miss the early warning signs that trouble is brewing, and lose the opportunity to intervene before things turn ugly. Oops, too late! Now there's a full-blown dogfight, and you've lost your dog park privileges. Turn in your membership card!

Rule-ignoring is also a problem. See that 85-pound Shepherd in the small-dog area? That's a tragedy waiting to happen. The owner who is blithely feeding her dog pieces of chicken while her toddler tried to hug the pretty doggies, even though the sign says "no treats in the off-leash area" and "no children under 8"? Another disaster in the making. Maybe two or three.

Well-run parks have paid staff whose job it is, among other things, to make sure dogs and humans play by the rules. Parks that aren't staffed are likely to have a much higher rate of unfortunate incidents than those that do, thanks in large part to those oblivious owners who think that rules only apply to others. If you plan to play in the park with your dog, be sure you're not one of them.

YOUR DOG

Perhaps you are fortunate enough to have a well-run dog park in your community. How to do you if your dog is a good dog park candidate? For starters, she must already play well with others. A dog park is for socializing, not for socialization.



When a park is built with a proper "airlock" system (entrance/exit has two gates), remove your dog's leash in the airlock area before entering the park. Dogs often get mobbed at the gate, and you and he are vulnerable if he is on-leash in the mob.



Dog owner/parents should follow all posted rules about children in the park, but more importantly, use common sense. Children should not be allowed to run or play with dogs (even their own) in a dog park, and should be supervised every moment.

CONCERNS ABOUT DOG PARKS

Some dog behavior and training professionals warn owners about dog parks.

Trish King, Director of Training and Behavior, Marin Humane Society, Novato, California, (marinhumanesociety.org) says potential dog park problems include:

- ❖ Dogs who bully other dogs who are more cautious or reserved.
- ❖ Dogs who form an impromptu pack, threatening incoming dogs.
- ❖ The natural tendency of dogs to gather around gates and entrances, posing a threatening environment for dogs just arriving at the park.

- ❖ The dogs' instinct to protect themselves, particularly if the owner fails to.

(Source: Marin Independent Journal, August 14, 2006; marinij.com/marin/ci_4178959)

Eric Goebelbecker, CPDT and owner of DogSpelledForward.com, of Maywood, New Jersey, says, "The problem is most dog parks aren't a safe place to play either. What dogs are going to be there today? Are they trustworthy? Did they come with responsible humans? Are they healthy? Are they fully vaccinated?"

(Source: dogstardaily.com/blogs/dog-parks-and-why-you-should-avoid-them)

Attorney Kenneth M. Phillips, owner and author of dogbitelaw.com, Beverly Hills, California, warns owners about potential legal issues, including:

- ❖ Dog owners not cleaning up after their dogs (resulting in possible fines, disease transmission, and municipal decisions to close parks).
- ❖ Inappropriate dogs at parks, resulting in dog fights and bites/injuries.
- ❖ Ambiguous waiver of rights/assumption of risk; if a sign says "Use park at your own risk," what does that mean?
- ❖ Inappropriate park locations, such as near playgrounds.
- ❖ Canine professionals who bring as many as 6-10 dogs to a park at once.

(Source: dogbitelaw.com/dog-parks-liability-for-dog-bites/dog-parks-and-liability-for-dog-bites.html)

It's a terrific place for a dog who already understands how to read and respond appropriately to the body language of other dogs. It's a great place for a dog who enjoys the company of other dogs and likes to engage in appropriate play. It's not the right place for a dog who is socially challenged. The undersocialized dog needs to learn those skills elsewhere, and may never be comfortable with rowdy play styles of unknown stranger dogs in a dog park setting.

If your dog is undersocialized, she needs to learn her canine social skills in a more controlled environment than a dog park. Pair her with one appropriate dog, who will tolerate her social ineptness. If yours is a little shy, a calm, stable adult dog can help her learn that other dogs are okay, maybe even fun to be around. If yours is a Rowdy Roberta who never learned when to back off, a more energetic playmate is in order, but one who will politely, firmly, and without taking

offense, tell your dog when enough is enough. In time, you hope, she will learn to self-inhibit her over-excited play, and be ready for group action. Or not. Some dogs are never good candidates for dog park membership.

It's perfectly normal for some dogs to eschew group play even from an early age. Others start out in life happy to play with all comers, but as they mature, decide they'd rather have a small circle of intimate play partners rather than interact with the canine hoi polloi found at most dog parks. Dogs who love to romp with any and all takers for their entire lives are the exception rather than the rule in the canine world – really not all that different from humans in that respect, when you think about it.

If you have any doubts about your dog's suitability for dog-park-play, get an outside opinion. Ask a competent dog behavior and training professional or a very dog-knowledgeable friend to evalu-

ate your dog's social skills before taking the park plunge and risking an incident that could put your dog and others at risk of harm. It could be a costly mistake if your dog attacks another and you end up paying vet bills and dancing to the often-onerous demands of your local dangerous dog ordinance.

If you do think your dog is a good park candidate, be sure you're making an honest assessment. It's easy to be blinded by your love for your canine pal. Unless he has a history of playing well with lots of dogs in a wide variety of situations, approach your dog park experience with caution. Make his first visit to the park at a low-usage time, perhaps accompanied by that dog-knowledgeable friend who can help you interpret his behavior around other dogs and assist with intervention should things not go according to plan. You cannot be too careful. And remember that dogs don't have to go to dog parks.

PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR DOG'S BEHAVIOR AND BODY LANGUAGE



Some dogs seem to be eternal victims at the park, as if they have an invisible (to us) "kick me" sign taped on their backs. They may or may not put out aggressive signals; tense, nervous, or submissive behavior may also elicit bullying responses from some other dogs. The value of exercising at the park may be negated by repeatedly subjecting a dog to this treatment.



All the white dog wanted to do was to run, but she always seemed to attract the attention of bullies. She offered no aggression in return, though she never rolled over or offered other obvious appeasement behaviors, either. Something about her attracted dogs who were intent on intimidating her. She would benefit from fewer or more playful "playmates."



This dog looks apprehensive about entering the park, even though her owner has her favorite things: tennis balls and a racket to hit them far. Once he started hitting balls for her to chase, she looked happy and focused on fetching. When intercepted by another dog, however, she whirled and told him in no uncertain terms that she does NOT want to play. From then on, her fetching was tense and her posture defensive. She'd undoubtedly have more fun fetching at a time or place without other dogs present!



YOUR PARK

If you're fortunate enough to have a dog park in your community and a dog who plays well with others, your last step before actually taking her to the park is checking it out to be sure it's a good place to take your canine pal. Here are some things to look for:

■ **Space and fencing.** The best parks are several acres or more, and are enclosed by a sturdy, well-maintained fence that's at least six feet high, perhaps with an anti-climb device on the top, and preferably buried in the ground at the bottom. If the area is too small for the number of dogs, there is a greater risk of canine conflict; the more space there is, the easier it is for a dog to avoid dogs that make her uncomfortable. And, of course, good fencing prevents escapes.

Another vital escape-protection and safety measure is an "airlock" system of gates, where dogs and their humans enter the park into a small enclosed space with another gate to the actual park run area. The owner removes the dog's leash in this airlock, checks to be sure the gate behind her is latched, and then opens the gate into the park. This prevents dogs from slipping out when a new dog enters the park, and also avoids the "one dog on-leash being mauled by a pack of loose dogs" scenario that can give rise to aggression and fear-causing incidents.

There should be at least two separately fenced areas in the park, clearly designated for large and small dogs, and owners should respect the designations. Even better: four or more separate areas clearly defined by size and play-style, so dogs who enjoy a good game of "chase me" aren't being tackled by body-slammers.

■ **Maintenance.** Upkeep of the facility is another important consideration. Scrutinize the conditions of the park. Is the grass mowed and nurtured, or is the park a muddy mess with overgrown weeds? There are some parks that are kept in a more natural state – especially parks that are larger and include woods and meadows and real hiking trails, but the entrance and social area should still be well maintained. If there's equipment for dogs to play on, it should also be kept up – painted, no splintered or rotten wood, and no exposed nails.

■ **Rules.** All good dog parks have rules. They should be clearly posted in plain

SAMPLE DOG PARK RULES

Park rules should be posted prominently near park entrances – if they're not, ask about them prior to bringing your dog to the park, and make sure you are able and willing to comply. Here are some of the rules that you are likely to find:

- ✓ If a separate area is provided for small dogs, please honor the size restrictions.
- ✓ Dogs over the age of 6 months must be spayed/neutered. (Alternatively, no females in season allowed.)
- ✓ All dogs must be currently licensed.
- ✓ No choke, prong, or shock collars. Remove harnesses.
- ✓ No unsupervised dogs; dogs may not be left unattended.
- ✓ Owners must clean up after dogs.
- ✓ Aggressive dogs are not allowed. Please do not bring dogs with a past history of aggression toward dogs or humans. Dogs who demonstrate aggressive behaviors toward dogs or humans in the park should immediately be removed from the park and not return.
- ✓ Children under the age 8 (or some other designated age) should not enter the off-leash area of the park. Alternatively, children under the age of (designated age) must be directly supervised at all times in the park. No running, loud, or rough play allowed.
- ✓ No more than three dogs per person (or other designated number).
- ✓ No smoking or eating within the fenced dog park area.
- ✓ Always close gates behind you.
- ✓ Be polite and considerate of other park users.
- ✓ Keep dogs on-leash until you enter the off-leash area (or the "airlock" immediately preceding the off-leash area).



No Insurance

Many insurance companies refuse to cover people who own dogs of certain breeds.

BY LISA RODIER

When Erin Sullivan's employer offered her a promotion and relocation to Orlando from Baltimore, she jumped at the chance to leave the cold behind in favor of the Sunshine State. Little did she know that her excitement would soon be quashed as she attempted to find a rental home – and subsequently, renter's insurance – that would accept her, her Pit Bull, and two Pit Bull-mixes.

Stories of breed discrimination by insurance companies (and rental property owners) abound as insurance companies increasingly refuse to write homeowner's and renter's policies for people who own breeds of dogs that the insurance industry considers to be "dangerous." Many opponents argue that the industry's decisions are based on faulty assumptions and improper use of dog bite statistics. Authors of scientific studies on dog bites have argued against the use of their data to support breed-based decision-making by insurers and legislatures. Major veterinary and breed registry organizations have also strongly opposed breed discrimination in insurance. None of these expert opinions seem to dissuade the insurance industry, however.

A TRIPLE WHAMMY

When Sullivan embarked upon a search to find rental housing in Orlando that would accept her and her dogs, she prepared resumes for her dogs, wrote letters explaining that she would be more than happy to provide liability insurance through a renters' policy that would cover the dogs, that she'd pay extra deposits,

Erin Sullivan's pit bull, Doc, has his Canine Good Citizen title and advanced training in several canine sports, including tracking. But owning Doc made it nearly impossible to find a company that would sell Sullivan renter's insurance in Florida, where she moved to take a new job.

provide stellar references, and Canine Good Citizen (CGC) and Temperament Testing certificates.

That strategy seemed to work – at first. She soon discovered that although she might find a suitable home to rent, the insurance policy of the home's owner would not allow for Sullivan's dogs to be on the premises. It took Sullivan "a couple of months of searching and worrying and being rejected by, literally, dozens of agents and private homeowners" be-

fore she found a great landlord who had a State Farm policy and allowed her to have her dogs live with her in the house.

It turns out that Sullivan's dogs were not the only factor that made it difficult for her to find an insurance provider. Sullivan learned that national insurance carriers had been leaving the state of Florida in droves, declining to renew – never mind issuing – policies due to high risk associated with Florida's hurricanes. Her choices were already limited by her choice of moving to Florida, and her choice in dogs made the task even more difficult!

INSURANCE LANDSCAPE

Homeowner's and renter's insurance are categorized by what the industry calls "cause of loss." These are property damage (fire, lightning, and debris removal; wind and hail; water damage and freezing; theft; all other) and liability (bodily injury and property damage; medical payments and other; credit card and other). Dog bites are in the latter category.

States are responsible for crafting laws that regulate insurers within their borders, and in no state is it mandatory that coverage be offered to every consumer who applies.

The problem is this: Many insurers base their decisions to cover renting or

PHOTO BY ROB BARTLETT,
BARTLETTIMAGE.COM



COMMON BREED DISCRIMINATION

Depending where you look, you can find different lists of breeds frequently banned by insurance companies; here is one such version:

- ✓ Alaskan Malamutes
- ✓ Akitas
- ✓ Chows
- ✓ Doberman Pinschers
- ✓ German Shepherds
- ✓ Pit Bulls
- ✓ Presa Canarios
- ✓ Rottweilers
- ✓ Siberian Huskies
- ✓ Staffordshire Terriers
- ✓ Wolf-hybrids
- ✓ Or a mix of any of the above



home-owning dog owners solely on the breed of the dogs, not the individual characteristics of the applicants' dogs. The insurance industry has prejudged entire breeds of dogs as being too risky. And few states have laws that compel insurers to write policies for all dog owners.

When it comes to insuring homeowners or renters with dogs, a few insurance companies consider each applicant on a case-by-case basis that includes the dog's history — querying the home owner as to whether the dog has a bite history (this is the case with my insurer, USAA). Others, however, maintain that their decisions are based upon their experience with claims for a certain breed, taken from their own database of the number of claims for dog bites and dog attacks per breed. Some base their decisions on lists of dogs considered to be dangerous; others cite published reports on the frequency of dog bites for certain breeds.

The Insurance Information Institute reports that, "Insurers generally oppose legislation that would require changes to their dog breed practices. They contend that government public health studies and the industry's claims histories show

that some breeds are more dangerous than others and are higher loss risks."

When I inquired with the states of Florida and Georgia, I received similar replies: It's legal for insurance companies to decline to offer coverage to individuals who own certain breeds of dogs or other animals that are considered aggressive. This seems to be the case across most of the U.S., although a few more forward-thinking states have passed laws that prohibit insurers from discriminating against dog owners based only on breed (Michigan and Pennsylvania, for example).

VALID RATIONALE?

It's true that dogs bite. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 4.7 million people are bitten by dogs annually, resulting in an estimated 800,000 injuries that require medical attention. Information from a December 2010 report from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality shows that in 2008, 9,500 Americans received "serious" dog bites. Treating patients admitted to a hospital for dog bites cost hospitals an average of \$18,200

per patient and \$54 million overall. The report also claims that over a 15-year period, hospitalizations for dog bites increased 100 percent.

The Insurance Information Institute reports that dog bites account for more than one-third of all homeowners' insurance liability claims, and that the total cost of the dog bite-related claims was about \$412 million in 2009. It reports that the average cost of dog bite claims was \$24,840 in 2009, while the number of claims increased 4.8 percent to 16,586.

Four hundred and twelve million sounds like a lot of money, but let's put it into perspective. Property damage accounts for about 96 percent of all claims, with liability claims accounting for the remaining 4 percent of claims — and dog bites accounting for a bit more than a third of liability claims.

Even if we assume the insurance industry has a grasp on dog bite numbers, the statistics they lack are reliable reports of bites by breed, which is a story in itself due to concerns about breed misidentification.

Two published reports seem to serve as the basis for breed discrimination related to dog bites by insurance companies. The first was a 1997 report, "Dog-Bite-Related Fatalities — United States, 1995-1996," published in the Centers for Disease Control's (CDC) weekly "Morbidity and Mortality Report." Authors of this report analyzed data from the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and media accounts of dog-bite-related fatalities in the NEXIS database.

The second report is "Breeds of Dogs Involved in Fatal Human Attacks in the United States between 1970 and 1998," published in the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association (JAVMA) in 2000. Its authors also analyzed data from HSUS and media accounts.

Here's the interesting thing: Both the CDC and American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) concluded that their own analyses cannot be used to infer breed-specific risk for dog bite fatalities, nor to identify specific breeds most likely to bite or kill. The CDC went so far as to stop tracking dog attacks by breed in 1998. Both organizations have further qualified that their reports should not be used for policy-making decisions. Why? Both cited several reasons, including the fact attacks by some breeds seem to be regarded as more news-worthy than other breeds, resulting in a disproport-

tionate number of articles about bites by certain breeds. Another factor cited was that identification of breeds is often subjective. Dog-bite-related fatalities, said the JAVMA study, “may be differentially ascribed to breeds with a reputation for aggression.”

Karen Delise, author of the Pit Bull Placebo and founder/researcher for the National Canine Research Council, notes that the CDC recommends “A Community Approach to Dog Bite Prevention” by the AVMA Task Force on Canine Aggression and Human-Canine Interactions. The CDC says, “Dog bites are a largely preventable public health problem, and adults and children can learn to reduce their chances of being bitten.” Their stance is that public education, not breed bans, will prevent dog bites.

Unfortunately, the CDC and JAVMA studies are *still* cited by some insurance companies as the basis for their policies to deny coverage to people with certain breeds of dogs.

BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE

If you are a homeowner with a mortgage, your mortgage company requires that you have insurance. Many landlords require their tenants to have a renter’s insurance policy. You are not required to have liability insurance if you own your home outright or your landlord does not require it, but going without insurance leaves you open to significant liability. The website Dog Bite Law advises that “Every dog owner needs to have homeowner’s insurance or renter’s insurance

that (a) provides coverage for, and does not exclude, injuries inflicted by dogs or animals in general, and (b) has a limit of at least \$100,000 for personal liability.”

Attorney Larry Cunningham, Assistant Dean for Students and assistant professor of legal writing at St. John’s University School of Law in New York, had firsthand experience with breed discrimination in Lubbock, Texas, when he went to buy a home and sought to purchase homeowner’s insurance to cover him and his two dogs, a Rottweiler and a Chow-mix. As a result of his eye-opening experience, he penned an informative piece, “The Case Against Dog Breed Discrimination by Homeowners’ Insurance Companies.”

Cunningham is clear on one point: You must not lie about your status as a dog owner when applying for insurance. “Consumers should definitely shop around, since there are a few companies who will consider an individual family’s circumstances and whether the family dog has a bite history. Above all else, however, families should not lie. Lying on an insurance application is a felony in most states (“insurance fraud”) and can invalidate the policy later on if there is a claim.”

The American Kennel Club (AKC) is against breed discrimination by insurance companies, stating, “If a dog is a well-behaved member of the household and the community, there is no reason to deny or cancel coverage. In fact, insurance companies should consider a dog an asset, a natural alarm system whose bark may deter intruders and prevent po-



Larry Cunningham, an attorney and law school professor, faced discrimination against his Chow-mix, Sassy (above), and Rottweiler, Semona, when he sought to purchase homeowner’s insurance in Lubbock, Texas.

tential theft.” Below are some of the tips they offer to dog owners on how to find homeowner’s insurance (from the online AKC Homeowners’ Insurance Resource Center):

- **Ask your dog-owner friends who they use for insurance; if your dog is a purebred, check with your dog’s national breed club for ideas.** I’d add to this: also check with local breed and training clubs, and other local dog resources such as dog daycare centers and trainers.
- **Contact your state’s insurance commissioner to get a list of the insurance companies doing business there.** Tell the commissioner of your frustration over companies’ discriminatory practices. The AKC recommends that, if you have had a policy cancellation or refusal to renew, ask the commissioner to review your policy. Remember, laws might exist, such as in Pennsylvania or Michigan, that prohibit insurance companies from discriminating by breed.
- **Agents within the same company may have different policies.** Talk to more than one representative for a particular carrier before giving up.
- **Contact your state senator or representative and let him or her know the difficulties you are having.** Ask that

HARD QUESTIONS

Before bringing that rescue dog into your life, think ahead: are you going to have the resources necessary to procure homeowner’s or renter’s insurance? Are you up for a battle if it comes to it? Do you live in a state that has friendly policies toward all breeds of dogs? Are you moving to an area that, in and of itself, presents a higher risk (i.e., flood plain) for an insurer?

It’s far better to know ahead of time, before you adopt a dog, whether you might encounter difficulties, rather than to be forced to make the painful decision to re-home him because you are unable to find a place to live or unable to purchase insurance. Sadly, many dogs end up in shelters for this very reason. Don’t become a statistic. Know your state and local laws before acquiring a dog.



SOME OF THE GOOD GUYS

The Animal Farm Foundation, Inc. (animalfarmfoundation.org) suggests the following as insurance companies that do not discriminate against dogs based solely on breed:

- ✓ Amica
- ✓ Auto-Owners Insurance
- ✓ Chubb Group
- ✓ Farmer's Insurance Group
- ✓ State Farm
- ✓ United Services Automobile Association (USAA)

Remember that different agents might have different policies, so just because you get a "no" from one agent with a particular organization, it still might make sense to try another agent within the same company. Also, you'll likely get different answers based on the state in which you live.

One woman who owns a pit bull-mix found a small, independent agency willing to insure her. An Internet search for your area, or general search for insurers willing to cover dogs might help you come up with these type of names.

she introduce legislation prohibiting insurance companies from discriminating against homeowners based on the breed of dog they own. (Note: The AKC's Government Relations Department has materials to help with this.)

- Provide proof that your dog has been trained, and/or has his CGC.
- Consider buying a separate liability policy or separate rider to your existing policy that is specifically directed toward your dogs.

Erin Sullivan's solution was to get an umbrella policy tied to her car insurance policy that offers liability insurance and covers the dogs. Unfortunately, she could not find any rental policies or homeowner's policies that would insure her. She says, "At this moment, I do not have any renter's insurance; no one down here in Florida will write a policy for my dogs, except Citizens (Property Insurance Corporation). And it would only exclude the dogs; it would not cover them."

In Cunningham's case, after weeks of calling nearly every insurance agent in Lubbock, he obtained insurance through the Texas Farm Bureau, an organization

that he says "advocates for farmers and farming issues."

I queried other individuals in similar situations; there are those who have foregone insurance; others have lied about their dogs; one built her own home after being asked to leave her rental apartment and also finding restrictions from some neighborhood associations; and one is paying an additional \$1,200 a year for a policy that has no breed restrictions.

THE STARK REALITY

Doggone Safe is a nonprofit organization dedicated to dog bite prevention through education and dog bite victim support. Co-founder and President Joan Orr says, "We think that the history and characteristics of the individual dog and the owner characteristics should be considered rather than the breed. This is difficult for insurance companies since they base everything on statistics and the stats indicate that certain breeds bite more.

"This does not take many other important variables into account, but I am not sure how else they could do it. Teenage and young adult males pay huge car insurance premiums (three or more times what females pay) because statistically they get into more accidents. This

is not fair on the boys that are safe and cautious, but it is the way insurance risk assessment works."

I asked Dean Cunningham what would be needed to convince state insurance regulators to step in and push through changes that would help dog owners. "State legislatures step in when there is political support behind particular regulation," he says. "For example, in the mid-1990s, it came to light that new mothers were being discharged from hospitals within 12-24 hours of giving birth because the insurance companies were not paying for longer stays. State legislatures stepped in and required insurance companies to pay for at least 48 hours. There was a political uproar that supported the legislative change. I'm not sure the same political pressure exists with the breed discrimination issue." 🐾

See page 24, for more resources for breed-related insurance issues.

Lisa Rodier shares her home with her husband and senior Bouvier, Jolie.

What you can do . . .

- Don't forego insurance. You might need to seek a creative solution; this might require asking lots of agents lots of questions.
- Don't lie to an insurance company about your dog's breed or whether you own a dog; that constitutes insurance fraud.
- Contact your state's insurance commissioner for assistance.
- Be a responsible dog guardian: train your dog; do not let your dog roam; do not tie your dog outside; do not leave your dog outside unattended.
- Even if you don't have a "dangerous breed," advocate to get legislation changed in your state. The possibility exists that soon insurers will consider any dog a risk.



Have Dog, Can Travel

How to prepare so that bringing your dog enhances your vacation for both of you!

BY MARDI RICHMOND

For some of us, taking a vacation just wouldn't be nearly as much fun if we couldn't share it with our dogs. Camping and other outdoor adventures are natural vacation options with our four-legged friends, although dog-friendly vacations can be as plush as a four-star hotel stay! Depending on you and your dog, your perfect dog-friendly vacation might mean a visit with your favorite aunt and uncle, sightseeing in your favorite historical town, long days hiking and swimming, or simply snoozing in a hammock on your favorite beach.

While taking your dog on vacation can be great fun, it can also pose some challenges. Not every dog (or person, for that matter) will enjoy a visit to a crowded tourist destination. Not every relative will appreciate having us show up on their doorstep with our dog in tow. And some dogs just aren't cut out for rugged camping adventures. Plus, some dogs become over-excited or anxious when traveling, which can lead to things like marking, barking, or destructive behavior. These won't make for the most relaxing vacation experience!

So how can you make sure that you have a fun-filled, happy vacation that includes your dog, and a dog who loves to vacation with you? It all starts with realistic expectations and being prepared.

When you think about vacationing with your dog, you may already have a destination, such as a visit with your favorite aunt or a trip to a national forest. If you're still considering your options, a quick Google search will reveal thousands of dog-friendly vacationing opportunities: camping, cabins, resorts, hotels and motels, beaches, dog camps, and even canoeing and boating trips. But which will you and your dog really enjoy?

To avoid a lot of "pre-training" for what you know will probably be a one-time experience, you may want to choose a get-away that brings you the experience you desire, while still taking into account

your dog's personality. Consider some of these dog-related questions when thinking about your vacation:

- Does your dog like adventure and excitement? Or would she be happier with a calm, quiet experience?
- Is your dog a seasoned traveler? Or will this experience be all new?
- Does your dog enjoy people? Other dogs?
- Does your dog have any special needs or physical limitations that might affect her enjoyment of a trip?

How will thinking about these questions help? If your dog is a social butterfly, and you both love the bustle

of people and activity, for example, you might choose a dog-friendly resort area or city.

In contrast, if your dog is shy of people or likes to run and swim, you might choose a quiet week in a lake-front cabin instead. Keeping your dog's personality and experience in mind will help you plan a fun vacation for you both.

DOGS ALLOWED OR DOG-FRIENDLY?

Once you have a specific type of trip in mind, it's time to do a little research. For most vacation destinations, you can find options that will allow dogs. But there is a vast difference between a place that simply allows pets and one that is truly pet-friendly.

Some tourist destinations, for example, allow dogs in hotels, campsites, and parking areas, but not when visiting the actual attractions. We found that out one year when visiting a state park. Our dogs were allowed in our campsite and the parking lot areas, but not on the trails that led to the river, beach, or redwoods.

In contrast, a friend recently returned from a tour of art galleries in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Their accommodations were welcoming of their young German Shepherd, but Cassie was also invited into every gallery they visited. Plus the city boasts a large off-leash dog park and walking area. Both dog and humans had a wonderful vacation and plan to return in the near future.

When making your vacation plans, call or query ahead and ask to make sure that what they consider "pet-friendly" really does meet your canine's needs.

- Are dogs allowed in the hotel, motel, or campground?

Your dog won't swamp your vacation if you've done plenty of prep work closer to home. Well before the trip, practice and reinforce any skills she'll need to display, such as staying in her designated spot in the canoe.



Here's how to get this behavior on cue:

1 Pick a word or cue such as “go potty” or “get busy.”

2 For about a week, every time you see your dog about to pee or poop, say “get busy” or your cue. This will begin creating an association between the words and the action. When the dog finishes, praise or give a reward.

3 Once your dog seems to be making the connection between the cue and eliminating, try asking your dog to “get busy” when you know he needs to, but isn't yet about to do it. Does your dog look for a place and make it happen? If so, you've successfully created an association, and you can use it in new places.

4 Keep rewarding your dog until he has it down! Now, when you get to a new place, you can take your dog to a designated potty area and say, “get busy.”

Along with teaching an elimination cue, you can help your dog understand where to go by doing the following:

- Give him the chance to relieve himself as soon as you arrive at a new place.
- Take your dog out regularly, much as you would a puppy. Praise or reward him for going in an appropriate spot.
- Don't expect your dog to know how to “ask” in this new place. And certainly don't expect him to find the potty spot on his own until you have been in a place several days and it is well established.
- Is your dog a marker? If so, keep a very close eye on him in the first hours or days in a new place. Interrupt marking behavior immediately and take him to a designated potty area.

Other behaviors that can help your dog have a great vacation include:

- ✓ **Coming when called. This is a critical safety skill.** If your dog gets loose in a new environment, he can easily become disoriented. Knowing to come back when called is even important for dogs who will be kept on-leash. You just never know when a dog will become upset or freaked out and take off unexpectedly.



If you *don't* want to do a lot of training beforehand, plan a trip that entails doing things that your dog is already really good at!

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- ✓ **Settle on their bed or in their crate.** If your dog knows how to settle, then you can use this behavior when you are dining in an outdoor restaurant or when you are ready to relax back at the hotel room. If you are visiting family, your dog may be more likely to be invited back if he can settle quietly during dinner or at the end of a busy social day.
- ✓ **Say hello. During travel, you will likely run into unfamiliar people.** Teaching your dog the important skill of greeting strangers can really help your dog's comfort level in a new place.
- ✓ **Loose-leash walking. Leashes are almost always required at some point during a vacation, and you'll both have a lot more fun if your dog isn't dragging you around.**

When you are embarking on a new experience with your dog, training ahead will help. But keep in mind that for a novice traveling dog, you will likely need to do some training along the way, too.

For example, one of my dogs started off his first camping adventure afraid of night noises. The first few nights of our camping trip were not much fun at all. I was awake, working with him to understand that the night rustles and owl hoots really weren't anything to be concerned about. But after that initial training, he

became a great camping dog – knowing what to ignore, and when to alert. Giving up a little sleep in order to train paid off big time for years of camping adventures.

PACKING LIST?

When getting ready to pack for yourself, your decisions will be influenced by where you will be staying, the weather, and what activities you will be enjoying. Consider the same things when deciding what to bring for your dog. The basics include food, water, and bowls, treats, poop bags, and a leash, but your list may expand depending on the type of vacation you are taking.

If your dog will have the opportunity to get wet, muddy, or covered with burrs and ticks, bring dog towels (and dog shampoo?), a brush, flea comb, and tick remover. For a hotel stay, bringing a comfy crate and an extra sheet or blanket to protect your bed would be more appropriate.

One of the most important things to consider for your dog is **identification**. Make sure your dog wears a well-fitting collar with current ID tags or nameplate. Even if your dog does not wear a collar or tags at home, it is critical should you become separated during your travels. Make sure the ID has a phone number that can be reached on your travels – ideally, your cell number.

A microchip is also a very good idea for all dogs, but especially when you take your dog on a trip. Most shelters



FAMILY VISITS

If you are visiting family or friends, the key to a great vacation with your dog pal is to ask first! Be direct: Would it be convenient for me to bring my dog? Even if your family and friends love your dog as much as you do (or love you enough to understand that you are a package deal), there may be situations when it is just not suitable to bring your dog.

If your dog will be attending a family event (such as a birthday party) she should be sociable and calm with strangers.

keep in mind how your dog will fit in with the plans. What will he or she do while you are at the rehearsal dinner? Will he be comfortable and quiet – or panting and barking – in a crate while you are toasting the bride and groom?

If your dog is welcome, and the visit is one that will allow your dog some fun times, too, checking in a little more than usual with your host can go a long way toward keeping good family and friend relationships happy. Consider asking, “What can I do to make it easier for you or your other family members (including your pets)? Do you have any household restrictions or requests (like not letting the dog on the new white carpet!)? Can I bring any extra supplies (like sheets to cover furniture)?”

Once you get to your family’s house, spend a little time helping your dog get settled before you get too involved with catching up with the relatives. **Make sure he eliminates outside before you go in**, then show him around in a calm, controlled manner, perhaps even keeping him on leash.

If there is a resident dog, take the dogs for a walk together before bringing them into the house together; even if they know each other, this will help them transition and be calmer once inside. Remember throughout your visit to help your dog follow the household rules like staying off the furniture or out of certain rooms. With your help, your dog-pal can learn the rules of this new place, and will be much more likely to be invited back again!

and veterinary emergency hospitals have scanners and will check for a microchip should your dog become lost. This is one time when planning for the worst is essential!

In some cases, for example if you are crossing state or national borders, you may need to have **health certificates** or proof of vaccines with you. Some parks or camp areas may also require proof of rabies or other vaccinations. Check ahead to make sure you have the paperwork you need.

For your dog’s comfort, always bring along **some things that are familiar**. A favorite bed or blanket or a cozy sleeping kennel are ideal. Having a familiar bed or blanket can really help your dog understand that where you are, he belongs! And if your dog has been taught to settle

on his bed, he will also know where to take a break from the excitement of your travels. Favorite toys can also help.

Think about **confinement tools**, too. A crate for sleeping or traveling in the car is great, but you might want to consider other types of confinement as well. For example, if you are car camping, your dog may be required to be on-leash at all times in the campground. But if you’re cooking over an open fire, you will not want to hold on to your dog’s leash. A cable tie-out or an exercise pen may be good options for hanging out around the camp. Of course you will need to be with your dog

and supervise if he is on a tie-out or in a pen, but your hands will be free for other activities.

Finally, think about what *you’ll* need, and then come up with a similar list for your dog. Will *you* need sun protection? Then you might need to think about sun protection for your dog as well. Will it be cold enough for a jacket? Perhaps your short-haired dog will also relax more comfortably with a sweater or jacket. What about insect repellent? Will you encounter fleas, ticks, or mosquitoes during your travels? Are you taking along your boots for hiking or a life jacket for boating? Then your dog may benefit from foot protection and a flotation vest. What about a first-aid kit? Obviously, for some vacations, you won’t need all of these items, but be sure to consider all of the “what ifs.”

ENJOY YOUR DOG!

My vacation this year will be to our favorite place in Northern California, called The Other Place. The house we will rent sits on a ridge top above the town of Boonville. It has the perfect balance of creature comforts for me and my partner, and wild dog experiences for our young Queensland heeler-mix. Plus, it’s private and calm – a good match for my dog’s needs and personality. We’ll hike and play, she’ll swim in the pond, and we’ll all relax in a big hammock overlooking a beautiful valley, brimming with bird song. We will also take a trip to the coast, spend a day walking with the dog-friendly trails of the Mendocino Botanical Gardens, dine at outdoor restaurants, and probably picnic by the river, too.

This type of vacation is well suited for our dog, with the right balance of activity, calm and quiet, and just a touch of social interaction. Some day, I may have a very outgoing dog, and then I will plan a vacation to one of the great dog-friendly resorts, or perhaps spend a week at a dog camp playing agility with other dog-fanatics and their dogs. But for now, this trip will suit all of us perfectly and give us, well, a real vacation! 🐾



Mardi Richmond is a writer and dog enthusiast in Santa Cruz, California, and co-author of Ruffing It: The Complete Guide to Camping with Dogs. She’s really looking forward to her vacation next month!

Causes of Death

Study revealed the most common causes of mortality in dogs – by breed, age, and size.

BY MARY STRAUS

A new 20-year retrospective study from the University of Georgia examined causes of death in dogs between 1984 and 2004. Researchers looked at records of 74,566 dogs from the Veterinary Medical Database, which includes data from 27 veterinary teaching hospitals. These results may be biased toward more severe, complicated, or unusual causes than the general dog population, but are fascinating nonetheless.

The study grouped deaths by organ system and by disease category (“pathophysiological process”), and analyzed results based on age, breed, and average breed size. Eighty-two breeds with at least 100 representatives were included in breed-based analyses; mixed-breed dogs were considered as one group. (For a chart listing causes of death by breed, see page 22.)

Only conditions that led to death were considered; if a dog had multiple conditions, only one was deemed the cause of death.

DISEASE CATEGORIES

The study found that cancer was by far the most common **disease category** cause of death in adult dogs; cancer was the leading cause of death in all but 11 breeds! Almost a third of all adult dogs were found to have died of cancer. Cancer was designated the cause of death almost three times as often as the next most common category of deaths (trauma).

Interestingly, the frequency of cancer deaths begins to taper after age 10.

Cancer occurred less frequently in small breeds, with the exception of the Boston Terrier and Cairn Terrier (30 and 32 percent respectively of deaths in those

breeds were from cancer).

The Miniature Pinscher had the lowest rate of cancer at 3.6 percent. Other breeds with low percentages of death from cancer include Miniature Dachshund (6.0), Chihuahua (7.5), Pekingese (7.9), Pomeranian (7.9), Dachshund (8.9), and Maltese (9.2).

The most common causes of death for puppies (dogs less than one year of age) by disease category are very different than for adult dogs. Puppies were overwhelmingly most likely to die of in-

fection, trauma, or congenital disease. About 60 percent of all puppies died from something in these three disease categories.

ORGAN SYSTEMS

When looking at deaths classified by **organ system**, the gastrointestinal and musculoskeletal systems were most commonly involved in the deaths of puppies.

In adult dogs, no single organ system was responsible for a dramatic majority of deaths; seven different organ systems had similar results, ranging from about 8 to 12 percent of adult dog deaths. The leaders (if we can call them that) were the nervous system (neurologic), musculoskeletal, and gastrointestinal systems, followed by the urogenital, hematopoietic, cardiovascular, and respiratory systems.

Older dogs are increasingly likely to die from something involving the cardiovascular system, as well as endocrine, neurologic, and urogenital systems. The frequency of gastrointestinal-related deaths remained fairly constant throughout adulthood, while hematopoietic and musculoskeletal deaths declined with age.

Small-breed dogs were more likely to die from neurologic, endocrine, and urogenital causes. The larger the dog, the more likely they were to die of musculoskeletal and gastrointestinal causes.



It helps to know what disease is most likely to afflict your dog's breed, or which organ system is most prone to problems.

SOME SURPRISES

Some of the breed differences found were surprising. A higher incidence of cancer in Bernese Mountain Dogs, Golden Retrievers, Scottish Terriers, and Boxers is well-known, but the 47 percent death rate from cancer among Bouvier de Flandres was unexpected.

Cardiovascular disease is well known in toy breeds, such as Chihuahuas and Maltese, because of their high incidence of mitral valve disease, but researchers were surprised to find that the rate was almost as high in Fox Terriers. It's unknown if that's because Fox Terriers are more prone to heart disease than previously realized, or if they're simply more protected from other diseases.

A high proportion of deaths from respiratory disease was expected in Bulldogs due to their brachycephalic airways, but finding that respiratory disease accounted for the highest percentage of deaths in the Afghan Hound and Vizla was unexpected.

EXAMPLES OF ORGAN SYSTEM PROBLEMS

The study did not provide details about which diseases are included in each category (my mind boggles at the details left out of published studies), but following are some examples of conditions that are likely to be classified in each organ system:

■ **Gastrointestinal** – Gastric dilatation and volvulus (GDV, or bloat) is likely the most common gastrointestinal cause of death; other causes would include pancreatitis, inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), intestinal obstruction, perianal fistula, exocrine pancreatic insufficiency (EPI), lymphangiectasia and other forms of protein-losing enteropathy, and cancer.

■ **Neurologic** – Diseases of the brain and spinal cord, such as intervertebral disc disease (IDD or IVDD) that can cause paralysis; strokes; seizure disorders; degenerative myelopathy; myasthenia gravis; encephalitis; laryngeal paralysis; wobbler syndrome; syringomyelia (common in Cavalier King Charles Spaniels); and tumors of the brain and spinal cord.

This category likely includes cognitive disorders as well, such as canine cognitive disorder (CCD) or cognitive dysfunction syndrome (CDS), similar to Alzheimer's in people. Diseases that cause paralysis, such as tick paralysis, polyradiculoneuri-

Following are statistics for canine deaths listed by the primary **organ system** involved, showing the breeds that had the highest rate of deaths attributed to that cause. The number in parentheses indicates the percentage of deaths within each breed for that category. (No organ system was classified for 20 percent of the deaths; these were not included in the rankings). The first five categories were responsible for most deaths in most breeds.

ORGAN SYSTEM	Breeds with the Highest Rate of Death (and Percentage of those Dogs) Attributed to Each Organ System
GASTROINTESTINAL	Great Dane (25.6), Gordon Setter (22.5), Akita (21.2), Shar-Pei (19.9), Weimaraner (17.6)
NEUROLOGIC	Dachshund (40.4), Miniature Dachshund (39.7), Pug (27.4), Miniature Pinscher (22.3), Boston Terrier (22.2)
MUSCULOSKELETAL	Saint Bernard (26.2), Great Pyrenees (25.5), Irish Wolfhound (22.1), Great Dane (21.7), Greyhound (21.4)
CARDIOVASCULAR (HEART DISEASE)	Newfoundland (23.8), Maltese (21.1), Chihuahua (18.5), Doberman Pinscher (17.2), Fox Terrier (16.3)
UROGENITAL	Scottish Terrier (17.0), Airedale Terrier (16.3), Dalmatian (16.2), Norwegian Elkhound (16.0), Cardigan Welsh Corgi (15.2), Standard Schnauzer (15.2), Bull Terrier (14.9), Lhasa Apso (14.9), Shetland Sheepdog (14.2), Finnish Spitz (14.0), Shih Tzu (13.9), English Cocker Spaniel (13.7)
RESPIRATORY	Bulldog (18.2), Borzoi (16.3), Yorkshire Terrier (16.1), Afghan Hound (16.0), Treeing Walker Coonhound (15.1), West Highland White Terrier (14.1), Pomeranian (13.6), Vizsla (13.6)
HEMATOPOIETIC	Chesapeake Bay Retriever (17.2), Airedale Terrier (15.2), Golden Retriever (15.0), American Cocker Spaniel (14.8), English Cocker Spaniel (13.7), Scottish Terrier (13.2)
DERMATOLOGIC (SKIN)	Shar-Pei (5.4), West Highland White Terrier (4.9), Miniature Pinscher (4.5), English Pointer (3.6), Chow Chow (2.9), Shetland Sheepdog (2.8)
ENDOCRINE	Fox Terrier (7.2), Miniature Poodle (6.3), West Highland White Terrier (6.2), Miniature Schnauzer (5.7), Bichon Frise (5.6), Old English Sheepdog (5.6)
HEPATIC (LIVER)	Scottish Terrier (7.8), English Cocker Spaniel (7.7), Maltese (7.5), Standard Schnauzer (7.2), Pembroke Welsh Corgi (7.0)
OPHTHALMOLOGIC (EYE)	Akita (9.9), Cardigan Welsh Corgi (3.6), Collie (3.2), Pekingese (3.1), Australian Heeler (3.0)

tis (coonhound paralysis), and botulism would likely be included in this category.

■ **Musculoskeletal** – Joint problems such as hip dysplasia, elbow dysplasia, and arthritis. Bone cancer would also fall into this category. Trauma is often linked to the musculoskeletal system as well.

■ **Urogenital** – Kidney disease, urinary stones, pyometra (infection of the uterus), and prostate disease. Stones are undoubtedly the major contributor to the Dalmatian's 16 percent of deaths in this category, and probably a big part of the high rates in Lhasa Apsos, Shih Tzu, and Miniature Schnauzers as well.

(For more information about urinary stones, see "Stoned Again?" in the May 2010 issue of WDJ; "Cast in Stone" and "Stone-Free Dalmatians," in the June 2010 issue; and "A Spotty Response," January 2011).

■ **Respiratory** – Brachycephalic airway, collapsed trachea, and pulmonary fibrosis. The Afghan Hound is prone to lung lobe torsion, which may account for their high rate of death in this category. Laryngeal paralysis is not uncommon in Vizslas; perhaps that disease was considered respiratory rather than neurologic by the study.

■ **Hematopoietic** – Relating to blood. Causes might include thrombocytopenia (low platelets), autoimmune hemolytic anemia (AIHA), and disseminated intravascular coagulation (DIC). This category could also include blood-related cancers such as leukemia, lymphoma, and hemangiosarcoma.

■ **Endocrine** – Cushing's disease and diabetes mellitus are the most common endocrine disorders in dogs. Addison's disease would also fall into this category.

Following are statistics for canine deaths listed by **disease category**, showing the breeds that had the highest rate of deaths attributed to that cause. (Thirty-five percent of deaths were unclassified by a disease category).

DISEASE CATEGORY	Breeds with the Highest Rate of Death (and Percentage of those Dogs) Attributed to Each Disease Category
NEOPLASIA (CANCER)	Bernese Mountain Dog (54.6), Golden Retriever (49.9), Scottish Terrier (47.6), Bouvier de Flandres (46.6), Boxer (44.3), Bullmastiff (44.0), Irish Setter (40.8), Airedale Terrier (40.2)
TRAUMA	Australian Heeler (20.8), American Staffordshire Terrier (20.3), Jack Russell Terrier (19.8), Miniature Pinscher (19.6), Australian Shepherd (17.9), Border Collie (17.5), Chihuahua (16.8), Chow Chow (16.6), Treeing Walker Coonhound (16.4), Greyhound (16.3), Mixed-Breed Dogs (16.2), Beagle (16.0), German Shorthaired Pointer (15.7)
INFECTIONS	Treeing Walker Coonhound (25.7), American Staffordshire Terrier (21.0), Greyhound (16.5), English Pointer (16.2), Cardigan Welsh Corgi (15.2), English Setter (14.8), Rottweiler (14.8), Black and Tan Coonhound (14.4), Australian Heeler (13.6), Bull Terrier (13.2), Siberian Husky (13.2)
CONGENITAL DISEASE	Newfoundland (17.5), Bulldog (13.5), Yorkshire Terrier (10.5), Akita (10.4), Maltese (9.7), Pug (8.4)
DEGENERATIVE	Chihuahua (7.2), Dachshund (6.3), Toy Poodle (5.2), Miniature Poodle (5.1), Pekingese (5.1), Newfoundland (4.5), Maltese (4.1)
INFLAMMATORY	American Cocker Spaniel (10.5), English Cocker Spaniel (9.4), Keeshond (7.8), Bernese Mountain Dog (7.6), Airedale Terrier (7.3)
METABOLIC	Doberman Pinscher (11.8), Keeshond (9.7), Cairn Terrier (9.5), Great Dane (8.9), Miniature Schnauzer (8.9), Standard Schnauzer (8.7), Shar-Pei (8.5), Miniature Poodle (8.2), Bichon Frise (8.0), Miniature Pinscher (8.0)
TOXIC	Australian Heeler (5.3), Australian Shepherd (5.1), American Eskimo (5.0), Miniature Pinscher (4.5), Norwegian Elkhound (3.7)
VASCULAR	Afghan Hound (2.9), Irish Wolfhound (2.8), Saint Bernard (2.7), Standard Schnauzer (2.5), Mastiff (2.2)

EXAMPLES OF DISEASE PROCESSES

Examples of conditions that were likely to be classified into the different disease process categories:

■ **Trauma** – Injury, such as being hit by a car, or being accidentally dropped or stepped on, especially in the case of toy-breed puppies.

■ **Infectious** – Viral disease, such as parvovirus and distemper; bacterial infections, such as leptospirosis and most tick diseases; fungal infections, such as blastomycosis and histoplasmosis; and protozoal disease, such as babesiosis and leishmaniasis.

■ **Congenital** – A condition present at birth, which may be genetic or caused by something that happened in the womb or during birth. Examples include liver shunts, common in the Yorkshire Terrier and Maltese as well as other toy breeds; and heart defects, common in the Newfoundland and Bulldog, among others.

■ **Degenerative** – Diseases such as degenerative disc disease, hip dysplasia, and other forms of joint disease fall into this category. There are also degenerative diseases of the eyes, heart, and other organs.

■ **Inflammatory** – IBD, pancreatitis, masticatory muscle myositis, and granulomatous meningoencephalomyelitis (GME) are inflammatory diseases.

■ **Metabolic** – Anything that affects the organs, including kidney and liver disease. Endocrine diseases would be considered metabolic, along with diabetes insipidus and urinary stones.

■ **Toxic** – Poisoning, such as by ingesting rat poison, toxic mushrooms, or antifreeze.

■ **Vascular** – Stroke (cerebral vascular accident) is the most obvious. Other possibilities include acquired liver shunts and fibrocartilaginous embolism (FCE).

PREVENTION STRATEGY

You can use this information to help your dog stay healthy.

First and foremost, keep your dog lean! Overweight dogs are more likely to develop musculoskeletal problems, disc disease, diabetes, heart disease, and even some forms of cancer.

Proper vaccination of puppies protects them from most infectious diseases, though frequent revaccination for viral diseases is unnecessary in adult dogs.

Spayed females cannot get pyometra (uterine infection) and neutered males are less likely to develop prostate disease.

Letting dogs off lead only in protected areas helps prevent deaths due to trauma.

Gastropexy (surgery to tack the stomach to the side of the body wall) to prevent torsion and reduce the risk of fatality from bloat can be performed proactively for commonly affected breeds or dogs with close relatives who have bloated, or during bloat surgery.

Even “doggie dementia” can be helped with appropriate supplements and medications (see “Old and Confused,” December 2008). EPA, DHA, antioxidants, and mitochondrial cofactors have been shown to improve the performance of older dogs on various cognitive tasks in as little as two to eight weeks.

Recently it’s been suggested that the high rate of cancer in Golden Retrievers can be partly traced to a single “popular sire” who sired over 1,000 puppies and later died of hemangiosarcoma. Because this dog and his progeny were used so extensively, the genes predisposing Golden Retrievers to hemangiosarcoma are now so widespread that it is difficult to breed around them. Breeders can help ensure genetic variation and avoid such outcomes by not over-breeding to a single dog or line of dogs.

The hope is that, armed with this new knowledge, veterinarians and owners can be proactive in watching for these diseases, taking preventative measures and beginning treatment early. The information from this study can also help direct breed-specific research on genetic causes and preventative measures for specific diseases. 🐾

See chart for causes of death listed by breed on the following page.

Mary Straus does research on canine health and nutrition topics as an avocation. She is the owner of the DogAware.com website.

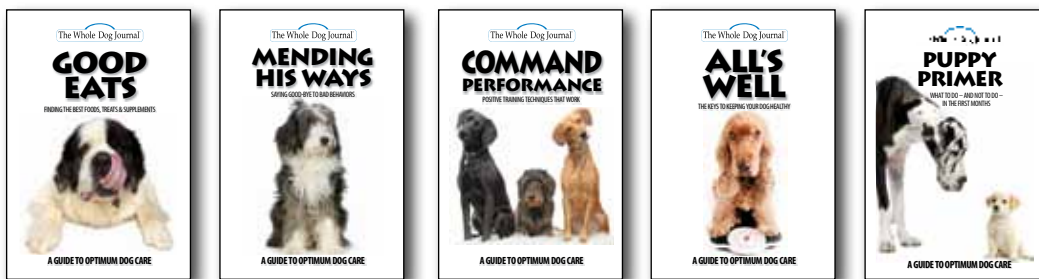
The table below shows the leading cause of death by organ system, and the top two causes of death by disease category, for each breed. The numbers show the percentage within each breed that died from the designated cause.

BREED	ORGAN SYSTEM	%	DISEASE CATEGORY	%	2ND DISEASE CATEGORY	%
Afghan Hound	Resp	16.0	Cancer	35.3	Trauma	9.7
Airedale	Urogen	16.3	Cancer	40.2	Trauma	7.6
Akita	Gastro	21.2	Cancer	20.7	Congen/Trauma	10.4
Alaskan Malamute	Musculo	15.2	Cancer	34.2	Infect/Trauma	8.9
Am. Cocker Spaniel	Hemato	14.8	Cancer	20.0	Inflam	10.5
American Eskimo	Gastro	14.4	Cancer	23.8	Trauma	13.8
Am. Staffordshire Terrier	Gastro	15.6	Cancer	22.0	Infect	21.0
Australian Heeler	Musc/Neuro	12.8	Trauma	20.8	Cancer	19.2
Australian Shepherd	Musculo	12.8	Cancer	23.6	Trauma	17.9
Basset Hound	Neuro	15.2	Cancer	37.8	Trauma	8.5
Beagle	Neuro	13.0	Cancer	23.1	Trauma	16.0
Bernese Mountain Dog	Cardio/Neuro	10.1	Cancer	54.6	Infect	8.4
Bichon Frise	Neuro	13.6	Cancer	21.3	Trauma	8.4
Black & Tan Coonhound	Gastro	15.3	Cancer	22.9	Infect	14.4
Border Collie	Musculo	14.3	Cancer	26.1	Trauma	17.5
Borzoi	Musc/Resp	16.3	Cancer	33.7	Infect/Trauma	7.7
Boston Terrier	Neuro	22.2	Cancer	30.4	Metab	7.4
Bouvier des Flandres	Gastro	14.2	Cancer	46.6	Trauma	8.0
Boxer	Neuro	18.2	Cancer	44.3	Trauma	7.0
Brittany	Musculo	12.8	Cancer	26.5	Trauma	15.5
Bull Terrier	Gastro/Uro	14.9	Cancer	21.5	Infect/Trauma	13.2
Bulldog	Resp	18.2	Cancer	20.4	Congen	13.5
Bullmastiff	Gastro	14.9	Cancer	44.0	Trauma	9.7
Cairn Terrier	Neuro	15.3	Cancer	32.2	Infect/Metab	9.5
Cardigan Welsh Corgi	Neuro	17.0	Cancer	22.3	Infect	15.2
Chesapeake Bay Retr.	Hemat	17.2	Cancer	28.5	Trauma	12.9
Chihuahua	Cardio	18.5	Trauma	16.8	Infect	10.5
Chow Chow	Gastro	17.4	Cancer	20.6	Trauma	16.6
Collie	Gastro	12.4	Cancer	26.5	Trauma	12.7
Dachshund	Neuro	40.4	Trauma	11.5	Cancer	8.9
Dachshund, Miniature	Neuro	39.7	Trauma	12.3	Cancer	6.0
Dalmatian	Urogen	16.2	Cancer	18.1	Infect	10.4
Doberman Pinscher	Cardio	17.2	Cancer	26.0	Metab	11.8
English Cocker Spaniel	Gastro	15.4	Cancer	24.8	Inflam	9.4
English Pointer	Neuro	12.2	Cancer	33.7	Infect	16.2
English Setter	Neuro	12.2	Cancer	35.7	Infect	14.8
English Springer Spaniel	Gastro	11.7	Cancer	29.7	Trauma	10.2
Finnish Spitz	Neuro	16.8	Cancer	27.1	Infect	13.1
Fox Terrier	Cardio	16.3	Cancer	24.4	Trauma	10.4
German Shepherd Dog	Gastro	15.1	Cancer	27.7	Trauma	11.1
Germ. Shorth. Pointer	Musculo	14.7	Cancer	27.0	Trauma	15.7
Golden Retriever	Hemat	15.0	Cancer	49.9	Trauma	7.8

BREED	ORGAN SYSTEM	%	DISEASE CATEGORY	%	2ND DISEASE CATEGORY	%
Gordon Setter	Gastro	22.5	Cancer	38.3	Trauma	12.5
Great Dane	Gastro	25.6	Cancer	22.8	Metab	8.9
Great Pyrenees	Musculo	25.5	Cancer	36.2	Trauma	12.8
Greyhound	Musculo	21.4	Cancer	21.6	Infect	16.5
Irish Setter	Musculo	17.5	Cancer	40.8	Trauma	8.0
Irish Wolfhound	Musculo	22.1	Cancer	31.8	Infect	7.8
Jack Russell Terrier	Neuro	20.7	Trauma	19.8	Cancer	17.2
Keeshond	Gastro	15.2	Cancer	28.0	Metab	9.7
Labrador Retriever	Musculo	14.6	Cancer	34.0	Trauma	14.1
Lhasa Apso	Neuro	16.5	Cancer	17.1	Trauma	11.8
Maltese	Cardio	21.1	Congen	9.7	Cancer	9.2
Mastiff	Musculo	17.8	Cancer	30.0	Trauma	12.8
Miniature Pinscher	Neuro	22.3	Trauma	19.6	Metab	8.0
Mixed-Breed Dogs	Musculo	13.5	Cancer	27.6	Trauma	16.2
Newfoundland	Cardio	23.8	Cancer	19.9	Congen	17.5
Norwegian Elkhound	Urogen	16.0	Cancer	37.4	Infect	10.7
Old English Shepherd	Gastro	13.8	Cancer	36.0	Infect	8.2
Pekingese	Neuro	14.6	Trauma	13.0	Infect	8.4
Pembroke Welsh Corgi	Neuro	15.7	Cancer	30.4	Congen	7.8
Pomeranian	Gastro	15.0	Trauma	13.1	Infect	8.6
Poodle, Miniature	Neuro	13.9	Cancer	18.5	Trauma	10.8
Poodle, Standard	Gastro	16.7	Cancer	27.1	Trauma	10.1
Poodle, Toy	Neuro	16.1	Trauma	11.7	Cancer	11.4
Pug	Neuro	27.4	Cancer	12.5	Infect	10.9
Rhodesian Ridgeback	Neuro	17.9	Cancer	37.4	Infect/Trauma	8.1
Rottweiler	Musculo	16.8	Cancer	29.6	Infect	14.8
Saint Bernard	Musculo	26.2	Cancer	26.9	Trauma	10.4
Samoyed	Gastro	13.4	Cancer	26.1	Trauma	8.6
Schnauzer, Miniature	Urogen	13.6	Cancer	22.3	Metab	8.9
Schnauzer, Standard	Urogen	15.2	Cancer	25.4	Metab	8.7
Scottish Terrier	Urogen	17.0	Cancer	47.6	Infect	5.9
Shar-Pei	Gastro	19.9	Cancer	22.9	Infect/Trauma	9.9
Shetland Sheepdog	Urogen	14.2	Cancer	30.3	Trauma	10.5
Shih Tzu	Urogen	13.9	Cancer	15.1	Infect	7.5
Siberian Husky	Gastro	12.5	Cancer	29.5	Infect	13.2
Treeing Walker Coonhound	Resp	15.1	Infect	25.7	Cancer	18.4
Vizsla	Resp	13.6	Cancer	36.4	Trauma	13.6
Weimaraner	Gastro	17.6	Cancer	25.0	Infect	10.5
West Highland White Terrier	Resp	14.1	Cancer	26.3	Infect	10.8
Yorkshire Terrier	Resp	16.1	Cancer	11.2	Trauma	10.7

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- ❖ National Association of Insurance Commissioners naic.org
- ❖ Insurance Information Institute iii.org
- ❖ **A Lawyer's Guide to Dangerous Dog Issues**, (Joan E. Schaffner, ed.), published by the American Bar Association, americanbar.org (also available from dogwise.com)

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