

RESULTS OF 2005 HEALTH SURVEY

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This survey was designed by the Health Committee of the West Highland White Terrier Club of America to be compared with the data collected from a similar survey presented in the year 2000. The overall response rate to the 2005 survey was 19.6%, down from the 27% seen in 2000. These numbers seem low but according to the AKC Canine Health Foundation, the national return rate for canine health surveys is between 7-9 percent. Results were returned on 2,173 dogs, 16% which had died since the 2000 survey. The average age for both male and females at the time of death was around 11.5 years.

The response to the 2005 survey indicates that the most common disease is atopic dermatitis with approximately 31% of the animals being affected. The diseases in order of prevalence by sex are:

Females	Males
1. Atopic Dermatitis	1. Atopic Dermatitis
2. Luxated Patellas	2. Luxated Patellas
3. Aggression	3. Aggression
4. Dry Eye	4. Inflammatory Bowel Disease
5. Inflammatory Bowel Disease	5. Legg-Perthes Disease
6. Legg-Perthes Disease	6. Dry Eye
7. Addison's Disease	
8. White Shaker Syndrome	
9. Pulmonary Fibrosis	

Of 337 dogs reported dead since 1999, slightly over 80% had at least one disease reported. The most common disease reported was atopic dermatitis, then pulmonary fibrosis, congestive heart failure, lymphoma, diabetes, dry eye, and luxated patellas. These diseases were not necessarily the cause of death, just increased prevalence found in the older deceased animals. Females had a slightly higher prevalence of disease than males, though lymphoma was statistically significant. Females had an incidence twice that of males with canine lymphoma.

The importance of pulmonary fibrosis is underscored as this was the number 2 reason of cause of death since 1999, approximately 10%. The WFA with assistance of the AKC Canine Health Foundation and Morris Animal Foundation, is sponsoring a Canine/Human IPF Conference in Lafayette, Indiana in October, 2007. This Conference will bring together the best of the animal and human researchers to share data and ideas to hopefully bring more answers.

Luxated Patellas were reported at a higher frequency among dogs alive in 2005 than in 2000. Medially luxating patellas remain a common orthopedic problem in toys, terriers, and other small breeds. Though poorly understood, congenital or development malalignment of the quadriceps

muscle is thought to be a possible cause. Females are generally thought to have this condition more often than males, though our survey did not support this.

The conclusion of the statistical interpretation of our 2005 survey shows the prevalence of targeted diseases remains essentially unchanged between the 2000 and 2005 surveys. With the common diseases of atopic dermatitis, deafness, luxated patella, and Legg-Perthes disease, the prevalences have modestly increased. The incidence of aggression, diabetes and pulmonary fibrosis on this survey shows a modest decrease. Because the genetic component is not known for each of these diseases, there is still much need for funded research and better breeding practices.