

The Norfolk Terrier Club of Great Britain



Breed Health Survey 2014

The Norfolk Terrier Breed Health Survey 2014

A general statement from the Health Subcommittee

A year ago, on the occasion of the AGM 2014, the membership agreed to fund this breed health survey. This included printing, envelopes, rubber stamps, and postage. Professional opinions from specialists at the Royal Veterinary College, and elsewhere, were solicited for free. These are the results. Thank you to all who participated. The Norfolk Terrier appreciates it greatly.

This survey was part of a much bigger endeavour to show that our Club is committed to ensuring that our breed stays healthy and robust as befits its reputation. Our health initiatives have included the 'Health Snapshot' and 'Heart Auscultation', which were started in 2009, and 'The Great Norfolk Terrier Weigh-In' of 2013, where 100 show-fit dogs and bitches were weighed. This was the first time ever that 100 Norfolk Terriers were weighed. We know of no other such record. And now, our official *Norfolk Terrier Breed Health Survey*. Up to now we have had no factual or official record that ours is a healthy and robust breed, only guesswork and anecdote. This document addresses that situation and is a first ever for the Norfolk Terrier in this country. It is also, arguably, the biggest sample of the breed ever included in a health survey in the world, namely 1216 individuals. This was a general survey of Norfolks out there, not only the ill ones, and included pet homes and large kennels. The overwhelming majority of forms returned were from households and kennels where the dogs were in good health and of excellent temperament. Many forms were returned with lovely letters. This effort on the part of the Club attests to our whole-breed approach to these matters.

The questions put in the Survey were drawn from the conditions reported in our Health Snapshot, our Cardiac Auscultation drive, and were decided upon in several meetings of the Health Subcommittee. Less common conditions are included under 'Other Conditions'. We are very much aware that results under the categories such as 'Caesarian' need further work.

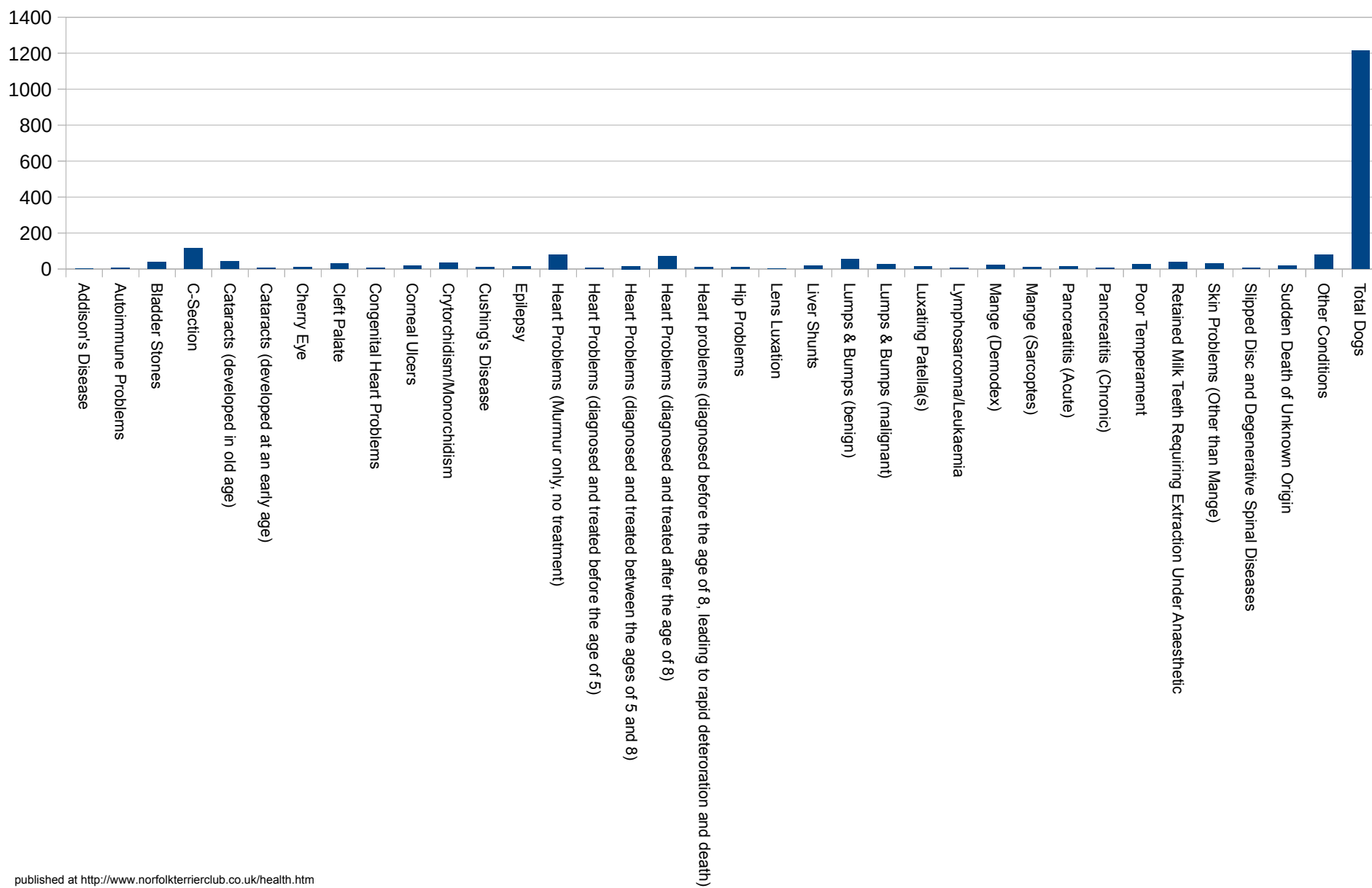
In our view, the survey revealed four areas worthy of closer attention: 1) Bladder Stones. We know that there is a strong possibility that it is hereditary, so please consider this in your breeding plans. 2) Poor Temperament. These are dogs that have bitten people. We understand that this is never straight forward, and we may look further into this. 3) Demodectic Mange. We know that the susceptibility to this is hereditary, so our firm advice is not to breed with these individuals. 4) Heart Disease. The incidence shown in our results is consistent for dogs as a whole, and better than terriers in general. We must, however, avoid being complacent. Although the mode of inheritance is known to be complex, the subcommittee's advice is to test before breeding.

Results of the Norfolk Terrier Club of Great Britain Breed Health Survey 2014

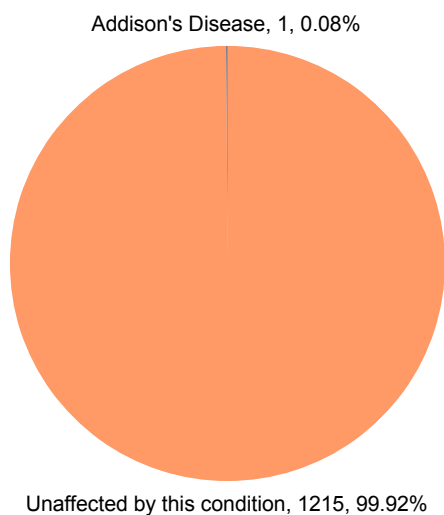
Condition	Cases	Percentage affected	Average Age (years)
Addison's Disease	1	0.08%	0.50
Autoimmune Problems	7	0.58%	5.04
Bladder Stones	36	2.96%	6.67
C-Section	114	9.38%	3.35
Cataracts (developed in old age)	43	3.54%	11.17
Cataracts (developed at an early age)	4	0.33%	5.13
Cherry Eye	8	0.66%	5.56
Cleft Palate	29	2.38%	0.00
Congenital Heart Problems	4	0.33%	3.79
Corneal Ulcers	17	1.40%	9.41
Cryptorchidism/Monorchidism	34	2.80%	0.00
Cushing's Disease	8	0.66%	9.00
Epilepsy	14	1.15%	5.89
Heart Problems (Murmur only, no treatment)	81	6.66%	7.35
Heart Problems (diagnosed and treated before the age of 5)	5	0.41%	4.06
Heart Problems (diagnosed and treated between the ages of 5 and 8)	16	1.32%	6.50
Heart Problems (diagnosed and treated after the age of 8)	71	5.84%	10.11
Heart problems (diagnosed before the age of 8, leading to rapid deterioration and death)	9	0.74%	7.42
Hip Problems (Hip dysplasia/Legg-Calve-Parthes Disease)	9	0.74%	1.59
Lens Luxation	1	0.08%	12.50
Liver Shunts	17	1.40%	2.21
Lumps & Bumps (benign)	55	4.52%	7.51
Lumps & Bumps (malignant)	26	2.14%	10.48
Luxating Patella(s)	13	1.07%	4.10
Lymphosarcoma/Leukaemia	6	0.49%	8.00
Mange (Demodex)	23	1.89%	1.76
Mange (Sarcoptes)	9	0.74%	4.39
Pancreatitis (Acute)	14	1.15%	8.57
Pancreatitis (Chronic)	5	0.41%	8.10
Poor Temperament (Bit People)	25	2.06%	3.71
Retained Milk Teeth Requiring Extraction Under Anaesthetic	37	3.04%	0.60
Skin Problems (Other than Mange)	29	2.38%	2.56
Slipped Disc and Degenerative Spinal Diseases	4	0.33%	11.44
Sudden Death of Unknown Origin	17	1.40%	8.93
Other Conditions	80	6.58%	5.32
Forms Returned	424		
Club Members	303		
Total Dogs	1216		

Overall Results of the Norfolk Terrier Club of Great Britain Survey 2014

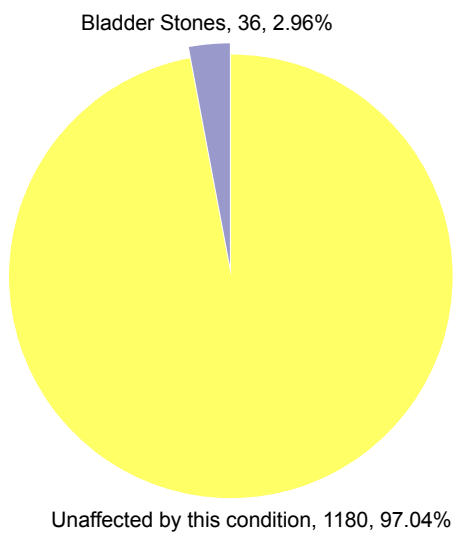
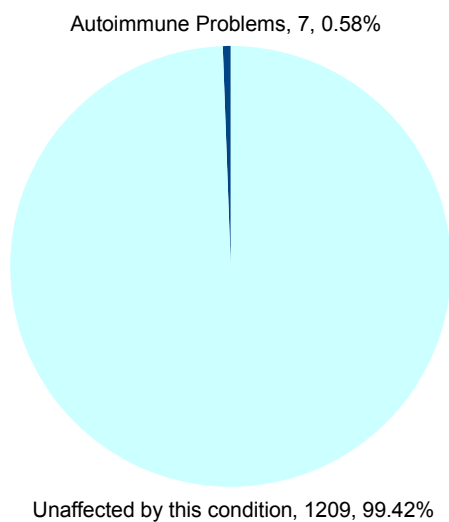
Numbers per Condition vs. Total Number in Survey



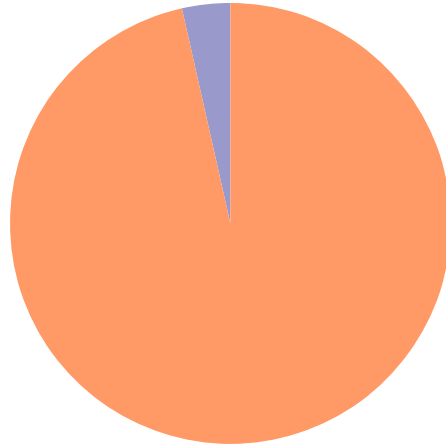
Results by Condition*



The values alongside the charts detail the condition represented, the number of cases in the survey, and the percentage of the survey population affected.

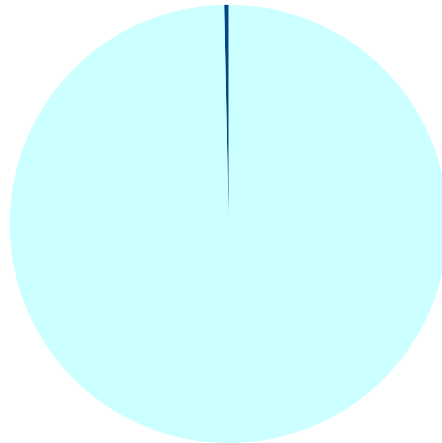


Cataracts (developed in old age), 43, 3.54%



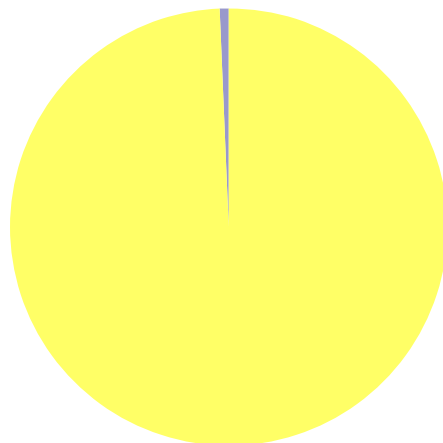
Unaffected by this condition, 1173, 96.46%

Cataracts (developed at an early age), 4, 0.33%

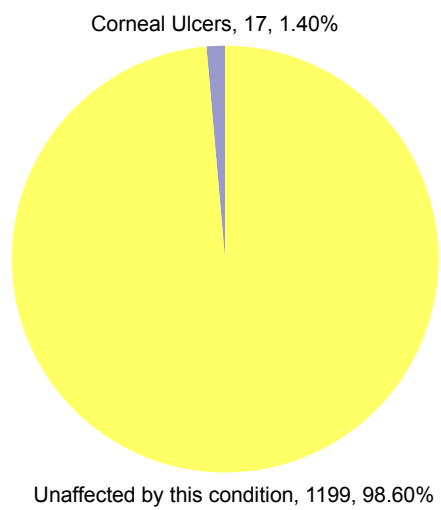
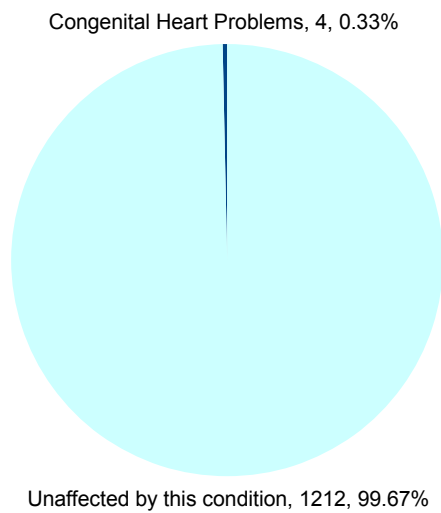
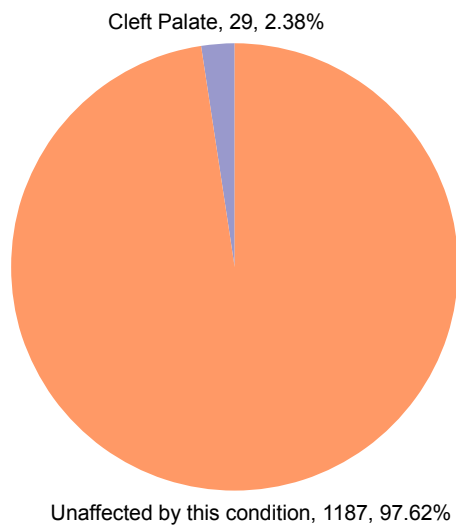


Unaffected by this condition, 1212, 99.67%

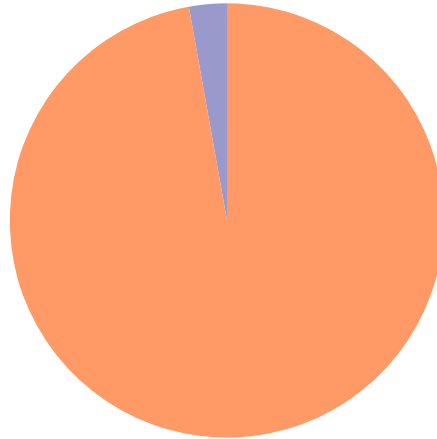
Cherry Eye, 8, 0.66%



Unaffected by this condition, 1208, 99.34%

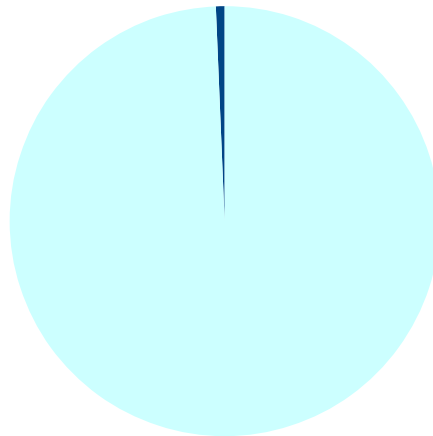


Cryptorchidism/Monorchidism, 34, 2.80%



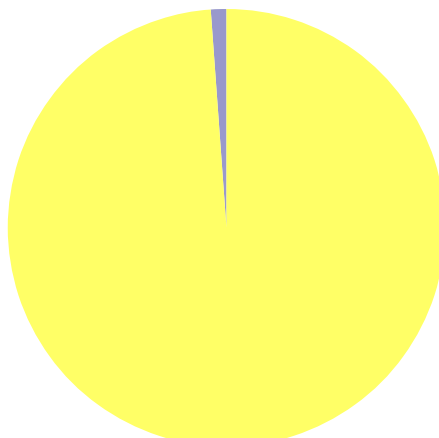
Unaffected by this condition, 1182, 97.20%

Cushing's Disease, 8, 0.66%



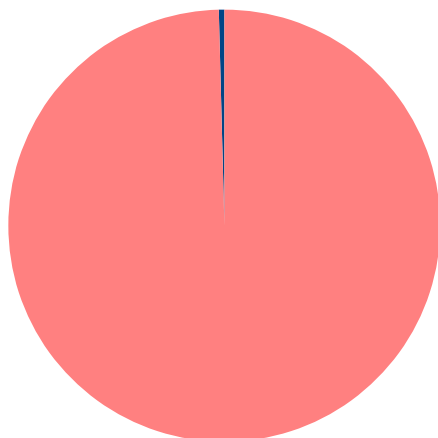
Unaffected by this condition, 1208, 99.34%

Epilepsy, 14, 1.15%



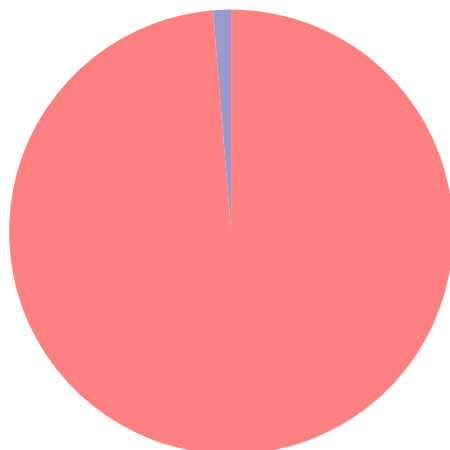
Unaffected by this condition, 1202, 98.85%

Heart Problems (diagnosed and treated before the age of 5), 5, 0.41%



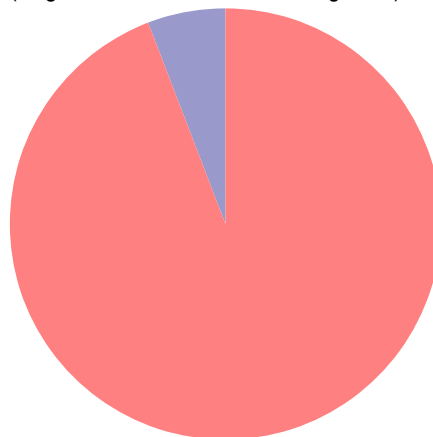
Unaffected by this condition, 1211, 99.59%

Heart Problems (diagnosed and treated between the ages of 5 and 8), 16, 1.32%



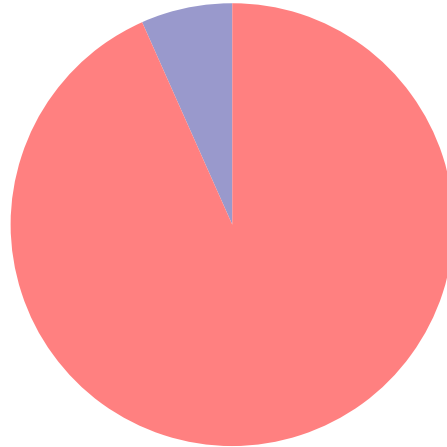
Unaffected by this condition, 1200, 98.68%

Heart Problems (diagnosed and treated after the age of 8), 71, 5.84%



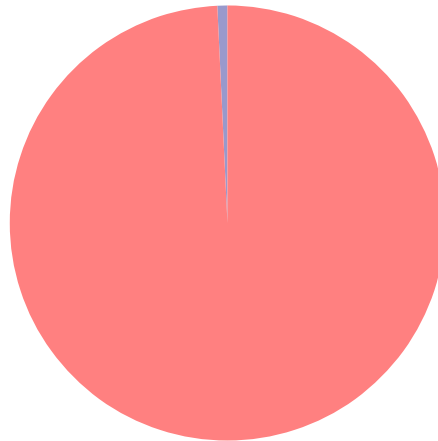
Unaffected by this condition, 1145, 94.16%

Heart Problems (Murmur only, no treatment), 81, 6.66%



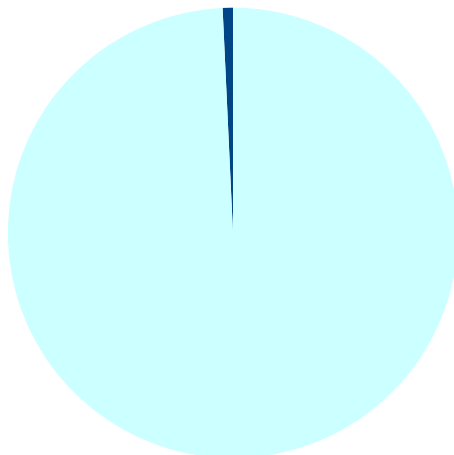
Unaffected by this condition, 1135, 93.34%

Heart problems (diagnosed before the age of 8, leading to rapid deterioration and death), 9, 0.74%

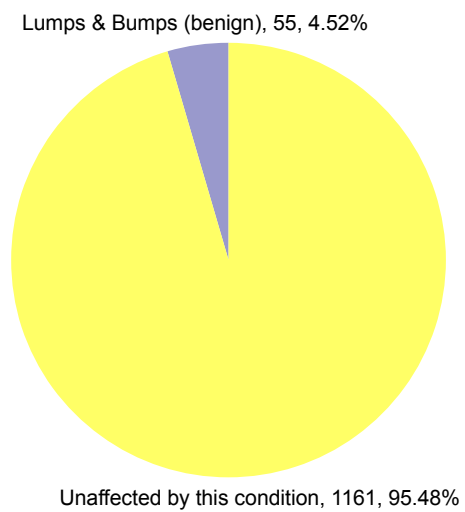
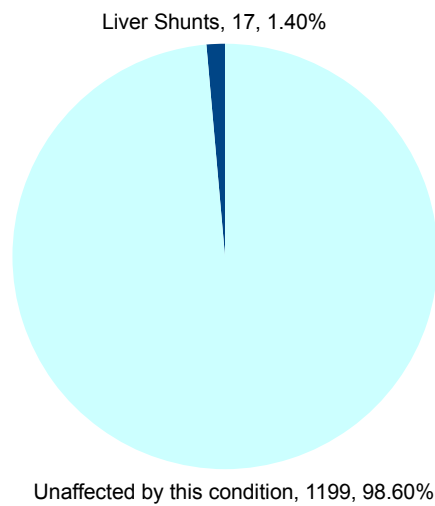
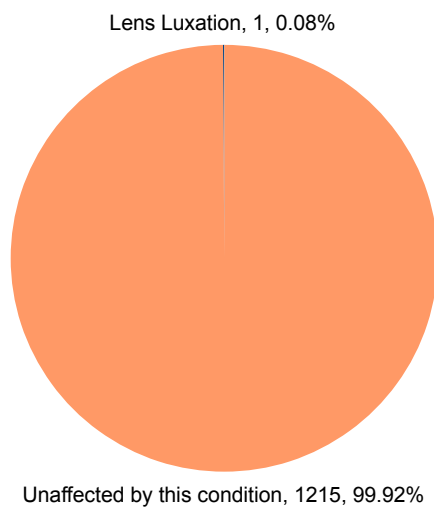


Unaffected by this condition, 1207, 99.26%

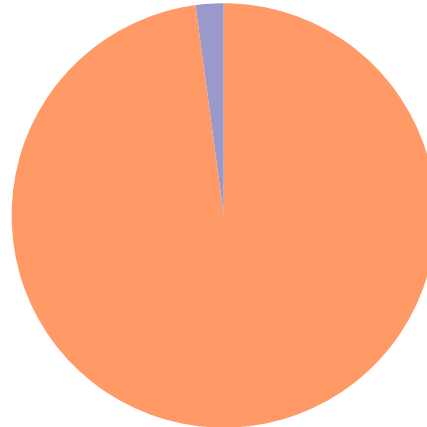
Hip Problems (Hip Dysplasia/Legg-Calve-Perthes Disease), 9, 0.74%



Unaffected by this condition, 1207, 99.26%

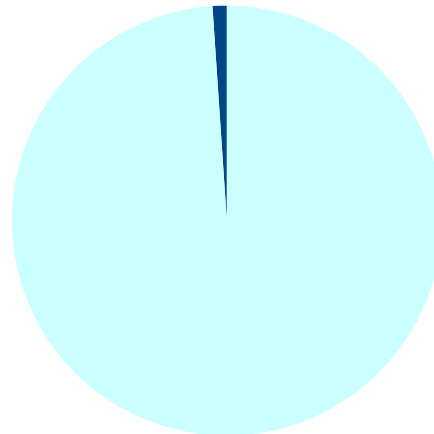


Lumps & Bumps (malignant), 26, 2.14%



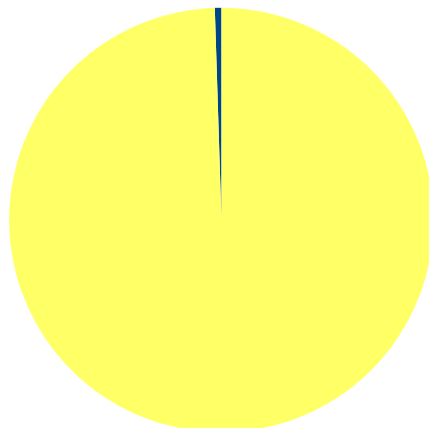
Unaffected by this condition, 1190, 97.86%

Luxating Patella(s), 13, 1.07%

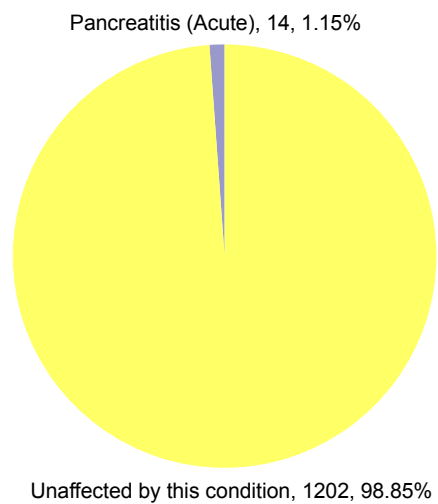
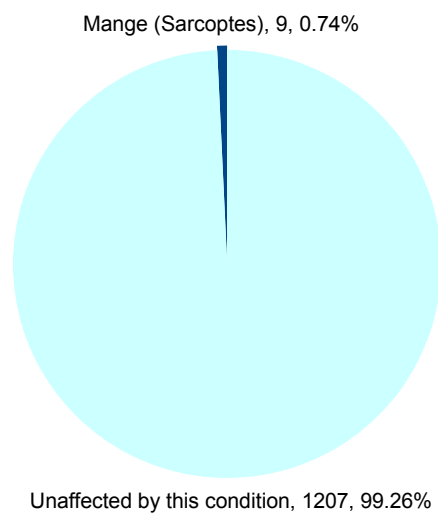
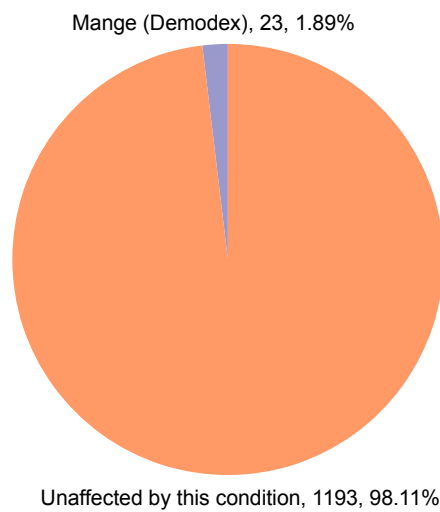


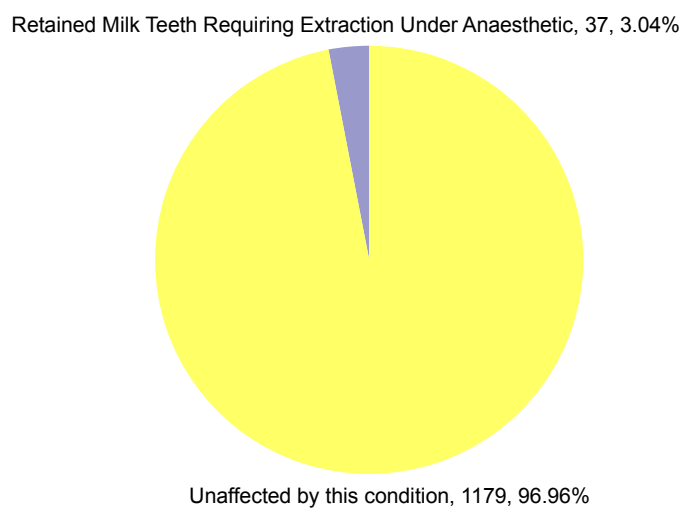
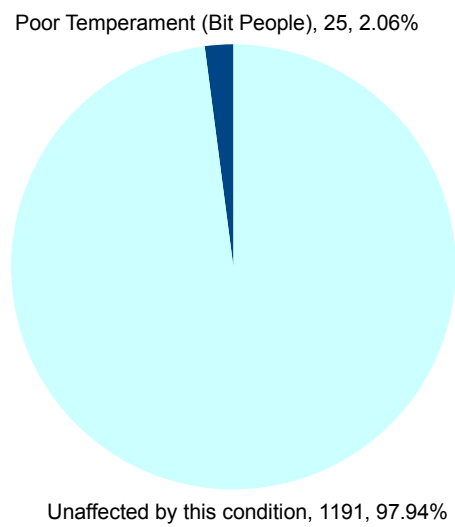
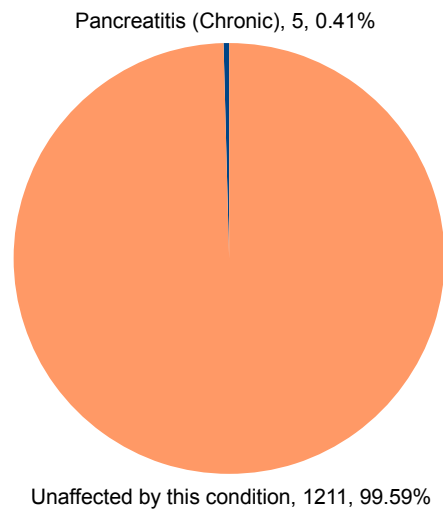
Unaffected by this condition, 1203, 98.93%

Lymphosarcoma/Leukaemia, 6, 0.49%

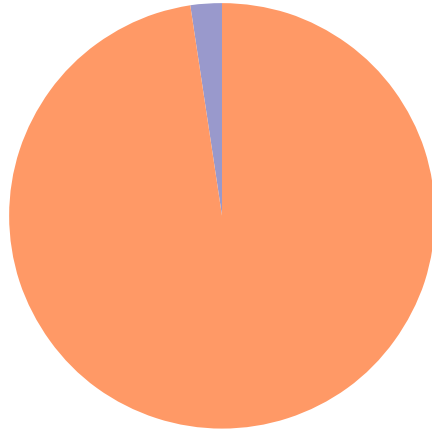


Unaffected by this condition, 1210, 99.51%



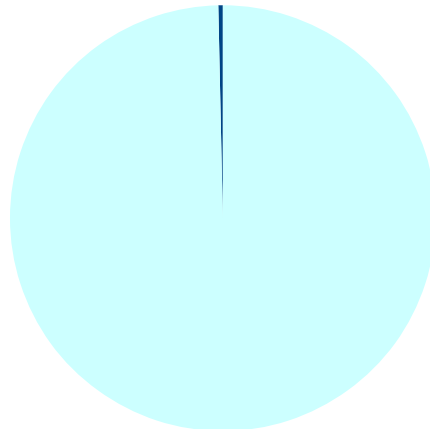


Skin Problems (Other than Mange), 29, 2.38%



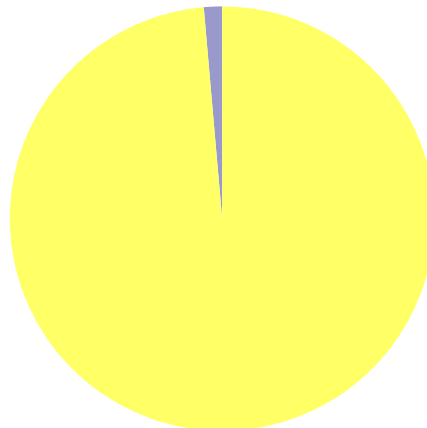
Unaffected by this condition, 1187, 97.62%

Slipped Disc and Degenerative Spinal Diseases, 4, 0.33%

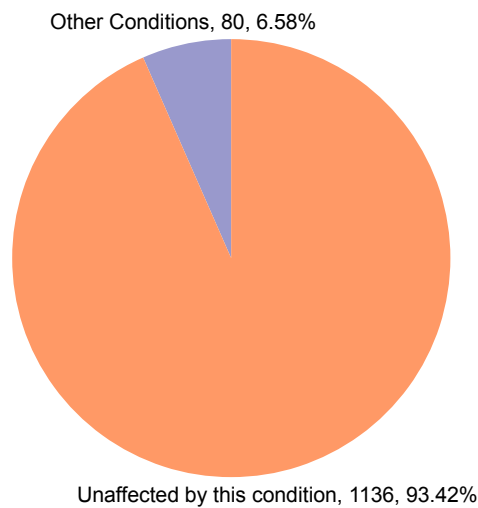


Unaffected by this condition, 1212, 99.67%

Sudden Death of Unknown Origin, 17, 1.40%



Unaffected by this condition, 1199, 98.60%



*Caesarian section is not included in these graphs because as well as only affecting bitches, many of those affected had more than one Caesarian performed and so accounted for more than one case, meaning an 'unaffected' statistic is meaningless.

It was also not possible from the data gathered to determine how many dogs were clear of any and all of these conditions throughout their lives, only how many were not affected by each individual condition.

Survey Results vs. Common Perceptions

As part of this survey, all respondents were asked to name what they thought were the five most prevalent conditions in the Norfolk Terrier. The top five are listed below, along with the five most prevalent conditions based on the results from the survey.

Owners' Perceptions:

1. Heart Conditions (many owners opted for the generalised 'heart conditions' rather than one specific type. Of those that were specified, murmur was the most prevalent, followed by heart conditions diagnosed and treated after the age of eight).
2. Other Conditions (Many of these referred to either food-related conditions such as obesity, which was not considered as a condition for the purposes of this survey).
3. Teeth (This was a write-in option that twenty-four respondents felt was a notable condition, several considered it the main condition to affect the Norfolk Terrier as a breed).
4. Bladder Stones
5. Caesarian Section

Survey Results:

1. Caesarian Section – One-hundred-and-fourteen cases, although this number may be slightly misleading as many of those bitches affected underwent more than one caesarian in their lifetime and so this represents fewer than one hundred dogs affected and placing the overall number closer to that of heart murmur at number 2 on the list.
2. Heart Murmur where no treatment was necessary
3. Other Conditions – This covered a wide range of conditions, from hernias [four cases] and gall bladder stones [three cases] to Dystrophin-deficient (X-linked) Muscular Dystrophy [one case].
4. Heart Problems diagnosed and treated after the age of eight.
5. Lumps & Bumps (benign)

NB. Some of the responses received suggested that Norfolk Terriers were more susceptible to teeth problems than other breeds, and that coat colour affected susceptibility to various conditions, including heart problems and cancers. This survey found no evidence to support these claims.

Richard Harle BSc (Hons) Veterinary Science

This breed health survey was managed by the Health Subcommittee of the Norfolk Terrier Club of Great Britain. The subcommittee consisted of club members Mrs Jill Stevenson, Mrs Linda Philip, and Dr Andre Hess MRCVS