

Schnauzer Breeds Health Survey 2011 – 2012

It is presumed that not everyone who either asked for or downloaded a survey form returned it, the respondents can be said to be a self-selected sample of responsible owners/breeders for this the second health survey covering all three sizes of Schnauzers.

- Table 1: 2011 / 2012 Sample Size

Breed	Dogs			
	Respondents		No surveys	
Giants	198	(140)	278	(194)
Schnauzers	103	(72)	159	(118)
Minis	509	(358)	628	(422)
TOTALS	810	(570)	1065	(734)

NB: The figures in brackets are the results from the 2010/2011 survey.

The sample size is an increase across all three sizes on the 2010 / 2011 Schnauzer Breeds Survey and once again there was an excellent response from Giant and Schnauzer owners. The results from this self-completion survey were positive and extremely valuable, building on from the data provided by the first survey. The percentages of the samples of dogs are very small and, therefore, we cannot make inferences from the findings but we can use them as useful indicative of status of all dogs.

- Across all three sizes, the survey indicated that the majority of dogs were not neutered or spayed. Likewise, the majority of dogs are vaccinated annually and 98% of dogs receive some form of medication against parasites annually. This percentage shows a rise on the last survey that was 95.6%.
- 86% of Giants were reported as being in healthy condition, **93% of Schnauzers** and 96% of miniatures that demonstrates the healthy status of the breed.
- The question “Has your dog any health defects?” asked respondents to self-report on any health defect and the data indicated relatively small percentages with 8% of all respondents reporting that their schnauzer had a ‘defect’. It is worth highlighting here that the health defect may not necessarily affect the health status of the dog.

Table 2: Reported Health Defects

Defect	Giants	Schnauzers	Minis
Teeth	12	3	10
Mouth			2
Undescended Testicle	12	5	8
Tail			2
Age related Blindness	2		12
Ears		4	7
Other			11

Some specifics that can be seen reported are teeth / mouth and in particular undershot, overshot and missing teeth (with no wry mouths being reported), undescended testicles and age related cataracts resulting in age-related blindness.

Some respondents reported under other conditions that are also reported elsewhere within the survey e.g. heart murmurs, noisiness in Miniatures, lameness, and epilepsy.

- The question that asked respondents if their dogs had any problems covered 'chronic problems that is distressing or affects the dogs health & welfare' and once again, the top 3 conditions of each size is reported on and assessed in relation to the KC /BSAVA analysis of conditions found in all breeds (based on responses from 36,006 live dogs):

1. **GIANTS:** top category with 12 cases was epilepsy. The position has not changed from the last survey. There has also been no change in the area of research either as all the current research papers available suggests that there is insufficient evidence to investigate this condition further as to whether there is any predisposition to the condition in the breed. Researchers suggest that at least 20 affected samples are required to start any mapping process within the breed.

The 2nd highest category was cancers and accounted for 10 cases. No one form of cancer was identified over any other.

The 3rd category was hypothyroidism with 9 cases. Again this was a small sample but does support the breed prevalence data (2007) from the tests carried out in Michigan State University, USA, where it is suggested that congenital hypothyroidism should be considered as having a predisposition in Giant Schnauzers. However, further work needs to be done in this country before any such conclusions can be drawn and therefore, these results must be interpreted with caution. There is the need to raise the awareness that a Thyroglobulin Autoantibody (TgAA) test can detect this disease years before clinical signs of hypothyroidism occur. Specifically, links should be made with the Animal health Trust (AHT) to determine whether this test is available in the UK.

2. **SCHNAUZERS:** These results are the same as last year's survey and demonstrate that the breed has no conditions exclusive to them. The top reported condition was cancer with 8 cases and again no one form appearing to be identified over any other. The 2nd was heart disease and accounted for 6 cases and again, commonly reported in puppies and young adults. The category of bone /skeletal disease made up the 3rd most common category with 5 dogs reported with problems.

3. **MINIATURES:** the top category with 23 cases being reported was those conditions affecting the gastrointestinal system. The most common diseases reported being haemorrhagic gastroenteritis, pancreatitis and colitis.

The joint 2nd highest category was cancers with 15 cases and again no one specific cancer reported above any other.

The 3rd category was cataracts with 12 cases, 11 were reported as age-related and 1 Hereditary Cataract (HC)

- Giant owners highlighted 22 dogs with unusual or undesirable behaviour problems in the breed compared to 11 standards and 116 miniatures.

In Miniatures, aggressive and noisy behaviours were reported in 42 and 41 cases respectively and 32 with timid behaviours coming into 3rd place.

By far the greater number of reported destructive behaviours (12 cases) can be seen in the Giants and followed by 6 cases of aggressive and 5 cases of timid behaviours.

6 cases of timid behaviours were reported in Schnauzers and 3 cases each for aggressive and destructive behaviours.

The obvious main difference between the 3 sizes on this question is simply that 41 cases in Miniatures were reported to be noisy!!

- This survey, 2011 – 2012, asked respondents to report on the deaths that had occurred in their dogs. A total of 108 cases were reported which when broken down, identified Giants with a total of 29, Schnauzers with 11 and Miniatures with 68 reported.

Table 3: Reported Deaths

Reason	Giants	Schnauzers	Miniatures
Cancers:			
Abdominal			6
Lymphoma			6
Toe	3		
Other	5	2	9
Age related	1	1	2
Aggression			1
Cushing's Syndrome			2
Died in sleep			9
Foll surgery			1
Haem gastritis			4
Heart	1	4	14
Liver	1	2	1
Pancreas	1		5
Stroke	1	1	3
Diabetes	1		2
Auto Immune Dis	1	1	
Epilepsy	4		
JKD	3		
Other	7		3

- The average age for Giants was 10 years (youngest 2 years 2 months and the oldest 15 years 3 months)
- The average age for Schnauzers was 10 years (youngest 2 years 5months and the oldest 15 and a half years)
- The average age in Miniatures was 12 and a half years (youngest 1 year old and the oldest 18 years 2 months)
- In Giants, the top category reported was 5 non-classified cancer cases. Whereas, in Schnauzers, the top category with 4 cases was heart related deaths, followed by 2 cases each of other cancers and liver disease
- By far the greatest number of collective reported deaths in Miniatures was cancer, with 6 cases of abdominal cancer, 6 cases of lymphoma and 9 cases of non-classified. The 2nd top category reported with 14 was deaths due to heart disease. The 3rd category with 9 was those that had died peacefully in their sleep.

In summary, the 2011 – 2012 survey has provided us with a positive response, good results, and extremely valuable and will continue to inform us all on our journey to improve the health and well being of the Breed.

The top highlights within our results are:

- ✓ Giants: Epilepsy 4.3%; Hypothyroidism 3.3%; Cancers 3.6%
- ✓ Schnauzers: Cancers 5%; Heart conditions 3.8%
- ✓ Miniatures: Gastrointestinal (grouped); 3.7%; Cancers 2.4%; Cataracts 2

Overall, the results have led us to believe that in order to continue to build up a greater understanding of the prevalence of conditions being reported in all three sizes, the following recommendations should be adopted:

NSC Recommendations for Schnauzers

- Schnauzer Adults should be screened for HC annually from 12 months of age and have a current eye certificate before breeding in accordance with the KC/BVA Eye Screening Programme
- Schnauzer owners /breeders /members are asked to report any heart disease and diagnosed cancers to the Club's Health Representative
- The NSC, together with the KC, BVA and any other source of research material, should identify and publicise any new health condition and /or the availability of any DNA tests relevant to any specific condition / disease