

## 1998 Miniature Bull Terrier Health Survey Summary

During autumn of 1998, the Miniature Bull Terrier Club of America administered the AKC Model Health Survey for Parent Clubs. The disease list used by the AKC survey was expanded slightly in order to accommodate our needs. The survey looked to establish a baseline incidence of known genetic canine diseases in Miniature Bull Terriers. As a result it is expected that the survey would be again administered in order to detect possible changes in incidence over time.

Several items also obtained demographic information about the respondents. Yet the method of the survey maintained the relative anonymity of respondents.

### ***Survey Administration***

A hardcopy form of the survey and code sheet were mailed to the addresses of all paidup members of MBTCA during late summer. I also adapted the survey for those interested members with internet access and placed it on [www.healthydogs.com](http://www.healthydogs.com), the website of the Bull Terrier Health Society. In setting up the survey scoring method, precautions were taken to insure that surveys completed via internet were not double-counted along with hardcopy duplicates also submitted for the same dogs. A reminder was sent to non-respondents and several extensions of the closing survey date were made at the request of members. The results reported are based on responses received through March 1999.

### ***Respondents***

How many: 25 members completed surveys from the pool of 125 survey invitations sent out (20%)

### ***Where from:***

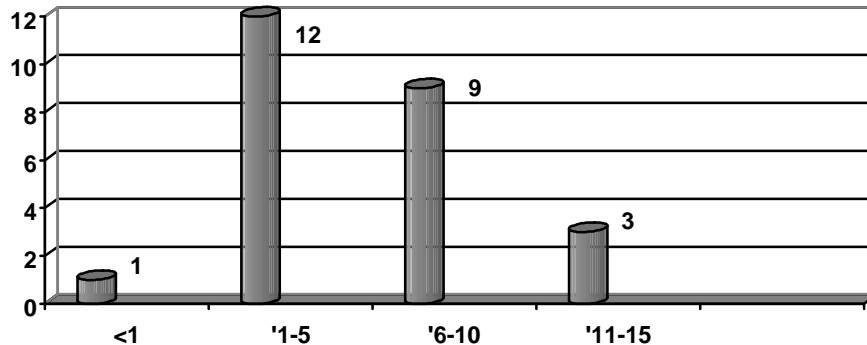
Survey responses were exclusively from the US:

<u><b>n</b></u>	<u><b>States</b></u>
3	CA IN
2	MA MO NC NJ
1	AZ CO CT FL IL KS MD ME VA TX - N/A

### ***Years in Breed of respondents:***

Most of our respondents fell in the 1-5 year cohort (12), the rest spreading out through 11 - 15 years in the breed. While the maturity of the respondents is evident, we have no means to know what they interpreted 'in the breed' to mean.

Years in breed



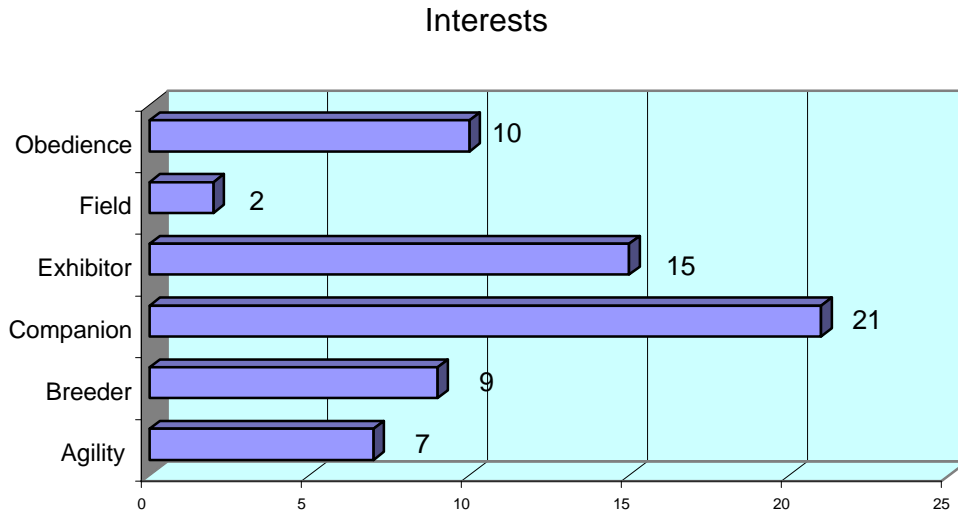
***Dogs in home by years in breed***

Most respondents (64%) had more than 1 dog in the home. And 10 of the 12 respondents who reported that they were in the breed over 5 years have multiple dogs in the home. The longer you have them the more of them you want!

Dogs in Home	<1 year	1-5 yrs	6-10 yrs	11-15 yrs	Total
1	1	6	2		9 (36%)
2		4	2	1	7 (28%)
3			3	1	4 (16%)
5		1	1		2 (8%)
6				1	1 (4%)
N/A		1			1(4%)
Total	1	12	9	3	25

***Respondents interests in Miniature Bull Terriers***

The far and away most common interest in Miniature Bull Terriers among our respondents was companionship, with exhibiting and obedience running well behind.



***The Dogs themselves:***

How many? Twenty-five members reported on 65 dogs. Of the 65 dogs reported 36 were described as "without disease". Of the 29 dogs reported with diseases, there were 46 separate diseases reported (averaging 1.6 diseases per sick dog).

***Color: Coloreds and whites were reported in approximately the same proportions. However, more brindles were defined as 'healthy' (66%) than whites 47%***

	<b><i>Brindles</i></b>	<b><i>Reds</i></b>	<b><i>Whites</i></b>	<b><i>Total</i></b>
<b><i>Without Disease</i></b>	<b><i>19</i></b>	<b><i>2</i></b>	<b><i>15</i></b>	<b><i>36</i></b>
<b><i>With Disease</i></b>	<b><i>10</i></b>	<b><i>2</i></b>	<b><i>17</i></b>	<b><i>29</i></b>
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>29</i></b>	<b><i>4</i></b>	<b><i>32</i></b>	<b><i>65</i></b>

*Sex:*

Males and Females were reported in approximately the same proportions. However more males were defined as 'Healthy' (50%) than Females (39%).

	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Total</i>
Without Disease	13	16	29
With Disease	20	16	36
Total	<b>33</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>65</b>

***Diseases Reported***

General disease categories ranked in descending order of frequency

<b>Disease Category</b>	<b><i>n</i></b>	<b><i>% of ill dogs</i></b>	<b><i>% of total (65)</i></b>
Heart	15	42	23
Ophthalmology	7	19	11
Skin	5	14	8
Reproductive (Female)	5	14	8
Cancer	4	11	6
Behavior/Temperament	3	8	5
Gastroenterology	2	5	3
Kidney	2	5	3
Neurology	1	3	1.5
Orthopedic	1	3	1.5
Reproductive (male)	1	3	1.5

Among those reporting heart disease(15), 53% reported heart murmur while 33% reported stenosis. Of the 7 dogs with ophthalmological problems, 4 reported glaucoma and 3 primary lens luxation.

As a category, skin disorders is difficult to interpret. Four of the five dogs reported "allergies". Among Female reproductive disorders, 2 reported difficulty whelping, 2 failure to conceive and 1 reported small litters.

Fewer than 5 reported cases within a general disease category suffers dearly from heterogeneity within the category, the small numbers problem and the fact that the survey allows for the same dog to report multiple diseases within the same category.

It is worth noting however that 2 of the 29 dogs reporting any kind of illness indicated kidney disease. It is evident that this pernicious disease process does effect Miniature Bull Terriers though seldom mentioned as a matter of concern among the MBT community. This is no doubt due to being overshadowed by the serious prevalence of Heart and Eye disorders.

***DX Method***

An indirect measure of the validity of these results is the respondents' reported method of diagnosis. Of the 46 diseases reportedly diagnosed, 76% came from veterinarians or lab tests.

**Method of Diagnosis**

N/A	Self	Breeder	Vet	2 <sup>nd</sup> Opinion	Lab Test
7%	13%	2%	52%	2%	24%

## Opinions of Respondents

**Lifespan** - This question sought the perception of average lifespan of the breed. Unfortunately only 10 of the 25 respondents offered an opinion. The following table shows the range of replies provided by the survey respondents.

	<i>&lt;1</i>	<i>1-5 years</i>	<i>6-10 yrs</i>	<i>11-15 yrs</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>N/A</i>	1	8	5	1	<b>15</b>
<b>9</b>			1		<b>1</b>
<b>10</b>		1	1		<b>2</b>
<b>11</b>			1		<b>1</b>
<b>12</b>		3	1	1	<b>5</b>
<b>13</b>				1	<b>1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>25</b>

## Top 3 diseases

Each survey respondent was asked to give an opinion of the three (3) most important diseases affecting Miniature Bull Terriers. The following table shows the combined replies of the respondents.

### Top Diseases Identified by Survey Respondents

<i>Disease Category</i>	<i>N out of 25</i>	<i>Per Cent</i>
Ophthalmology	20	80%
Heart Disease	14	56%
Kidney Disease	9	36%
Skin	4	16%
Cancer	2	8%

Because there are so few Miniature Bull Terriers in the land, the results of such surveys are difficult to interpret. Small numbers are inherently unstable and there is the problem of self-selection, ie how representative of the population as a whole are those who have elected to respond to this survey?

Nonetheless, the survey provides a glimpse of the magnitude of the health issues we face in the breed and which ones we believe deserve our attention most.

I will place more detailed cross-tabs of these results out on the healthydogs.com website for those interested in looking at them themselves.

Please do not hesitate to call with any questions.



Kevin Welch  
Treasurer, MBTCA  
Member, MBTCA Health Cte

