

Update on Golden Retriever Lifetime Study published

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As the Morris Animal Foundation Golden Retriever Lifetime Study approaches its 10th anniversary, a newly published paper in the journal *PLOS ONE* reviews the study's findings to date and previews research in

progress.

The latest publication from the study team summarizes the current demographics of the cohort as well as reports on health parameters such as cancer diagnoses and deaths.

"The new publication provides detailed information on our cohort as of May 2021," said Dr. Julia Labadie, former study epidemiologist, currently Senior Scientist, Statistical Genetics at Wisdom Health, and the paper's lead author. "We hope the paper will not only update the veterinary and lay communities about the study but will stimulate more researchers to contact us for access to samples and data."

The paper includes an update on the primary endpoints, as of May 31, 2021, that are tracking the occurrence of the four major cancers of interest—hemangiosarcoma, [lymphoma/leukemia](#), [osteosarcoma](#), and high-grade mast cell tumors. At that time, the study had obtained 223 of the 500 desired primary endpoints, with hemangiosarcoma being the most common. The current paper also reports on some of the challenges the study is addressing, including adjudication of veterinary diagnoses.

Other key findings and publications from the study to date include biochemistry variation in healthy dogs, factors associated with early owner compliance, age at gonadectomy and risk of orthopedic injury and overweight/obesity, and inbreeding depression.

More than 3,000 golden retrievers from the contiguous United States were originally entered in the study, which launched in 2012 and reached full enrollment in 2015. Owners and [veterinarians](#) complete yearly online questionnaires about the health status and lifestyle of the dogs. Biological samples also are collected, and each dog has a physical study examination annually.

The Golden Retriever Lifetime Study is the most extensive prospective study ever undertaken in veterinary medicine, gathering information on the enrolled golden retrievers throughout their lives to identify the nutritional, environmental, lifestyle and genetic risk factors for [cancer](#) and other diseases in dogs. It's the first Morris Animal Foundation-funded study conceived, designed and run by the Foundation and its scientific team.

"The Golden Retriever Lifetime Study is a rich source of data and samples from the first canine longitudinal cohort of this size," said Dr. Janet Patterson-Kane, Morris Animal Foundation Chief Scientific Officer and another of the paper's authors. "The study data and samples are a legacy of these special [dogs](#), that will continue to impact scientific discovery for decades to come."

More information: Julia Labadie et al, Cohort profile: The Golden Retriever Lifetime Study (GRLS), *PLOS ONE* (2022). [DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0269425](#)

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