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Dog Breeds: What you need to know about the Whippet

🕒 January 10, 2022

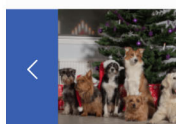
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Staying up to date with common, let alone rare, health risks in susceptible dog breeds can be difficult. In this regular feature, our Educational Partner, the [International Partnership for Dogs \(IPFD\)](#), signposts resources on a particular breed and highlights breed-specific diseases

Meet the Whippet – Update Your Knowledge!

The Kennel Club in the UK describes them as a “Small, speedy sighthound traditionally used for racing”. Whippets are a relatively healthy breed being well-recognized but not overly common breed outside of the UK. Whippet enthusiasts are making efforts to guard the health and well-being of the breed with various initiatives and data sources to support breeders in producing healthy puppies.

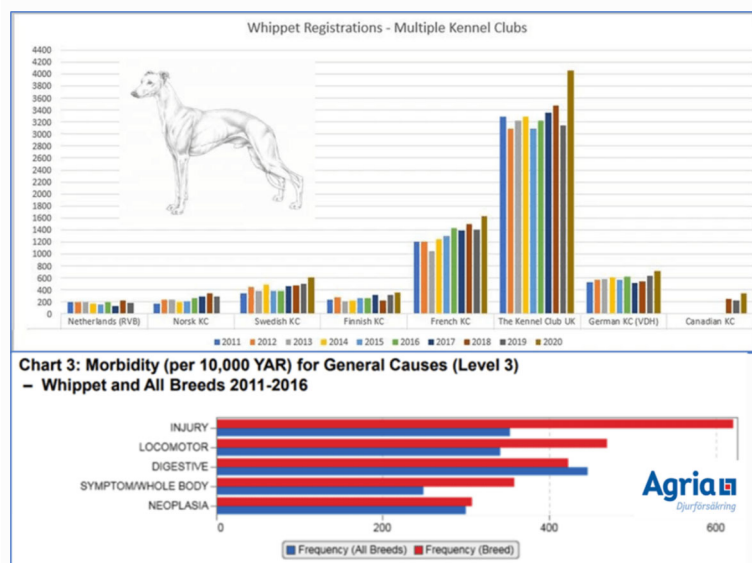
In Sweden, the breed club produces the Breed-specific Breeding Strategies Document (RAS) which provides statistics on the occurrence of health issues, including an indication of a reduction in the Coefficient of Inbreeding (COI) over recent years. As for other breeds, the Finnish Kennel club provides health and death statistics and also a breeding strategy document (JTO). The parent breed club in the USA participates in the OFA/CHIC program and sponsors the Whippet Health Foundation database. Here individual dogs can be searched for health test



results and more. Like most countries, the UK focuses on heart and possible inbreeding, with an eye on hip and elbow dysplasia, and epilepsy... but the breed is in Category 1 (no major health problems). See details on all these issues and resources in the IPFD [Get a GRIHP on Whippets](#).

Breeders need to be aware that genetic diversity may be a problem in the breed according to a recent detailed analysis (link below). In terms of genetic tests, as a sighthound MDR1 is recommended.

So – what do owners or potential owners of whippets need to know? The temperament and exercise requirements of this breed need to be understood, as they are somewhat prone to separation anxiety and do not appreciate cold weather! And they can be prone to injury as one might expect due to their nature and usage (see image).



More resources to help you:

1. [Get a GRIHP on Whippets](#)
2. [Genetic Diversity Testing for the Whippet Report \(Betterbred /UC Davis\)](#)

The International Partnership for Dogs (IPFD) is a non-profit working for dog health, well-being, and welfare. This article has been prepared by its Veterinary Science Officer, Dr Brenda Bonnett, DVM PhD.

IPFD 
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