



# OUTLINE



WHAT IS COMMUNITY SCIENCE?



**INVOLVED** 



WHAT IS THE DOG **AGING PROJECT?** 



TRIAD THE TEST OF RAPAMYCIN IN AGING DOGS



HOW DOES THE DOG **AGING PROJECT WORK?** 





WHY STUDY AGING IN DOGS?



# WHAT IS COMMUNITY SCIENCE?

# **COMMUNITY SCIENCE**

"A field that develops and researches community-centered models that enable communities to use evidence-based interventions more effectively and efficiently" (Tebes 2005)



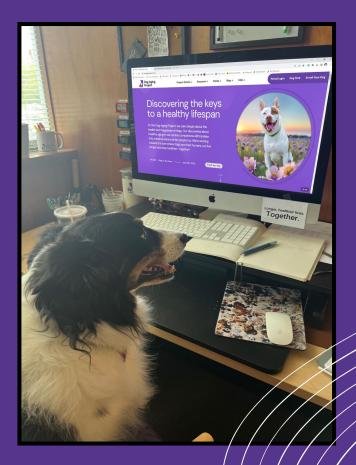
"[...] an approach to academic-community partnerships that shares power with community partners in all aspects of the research process and benefits communities through interventions or policy" (Collins et al. 2022)

"community members collaborate, often with scientists and science engagement practitioners [...] to advance community priorities and benefit from science and engineering knowledge and advancements" (Community Science Initiative)





Tebes JK. Community Science, Philosophy of Science, and the Practice of Research. American Journal of Community Psychology. 2005;35(3-4):213-230. doi:10.1007/s10464-005-3399-x Collins SA, Sullivan M, Bray HJ. Exploring scientists' perceptions of citizen science for public engagement with science. JCOM. 2022;21(7):A01. doi:10.22323/2.21070201 https://communityscience.astc.org/



## **IN OTHER WORDS...**

scientific research and monitoring driven and supported by and engaged with local communities



Gulf of Maine Research Institute

# **GULF OF MAINE RESEARCH INSTITUTE**

Rising sea levels and coastal flooding are a serious issue

Coastline of GoM is >5000 miles long with only 3 tide gauges

How can one research team possibly survey the entire coastline timely and accurately?

- They don't have to: Get the community involved!
- <u>https://investigate.gmri.org/project/coastal\_flooding</u>
  - Instructions for the local community to go to the coast and collect observational data





#### **RESEARCH BENEFITS**

Ability to monitor a wider area and collect more data

Enhances data robustness by increasing participation rates

Grounds the research in real-life contexts

GULF OF MAINE: WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

### COMMUNITY BENEFITS



## Community involvement in local issues

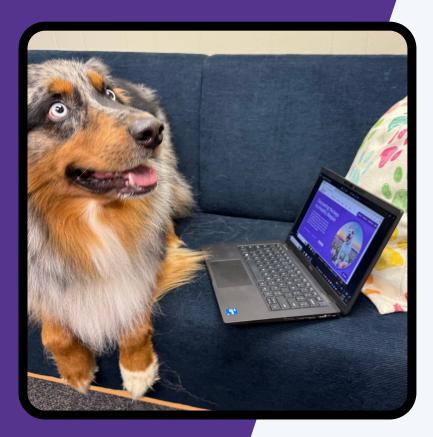
Ability for community members to learn about the project's topics, leading to more informed views and decisions

The joy of supporting research initiatives to better your community and more!

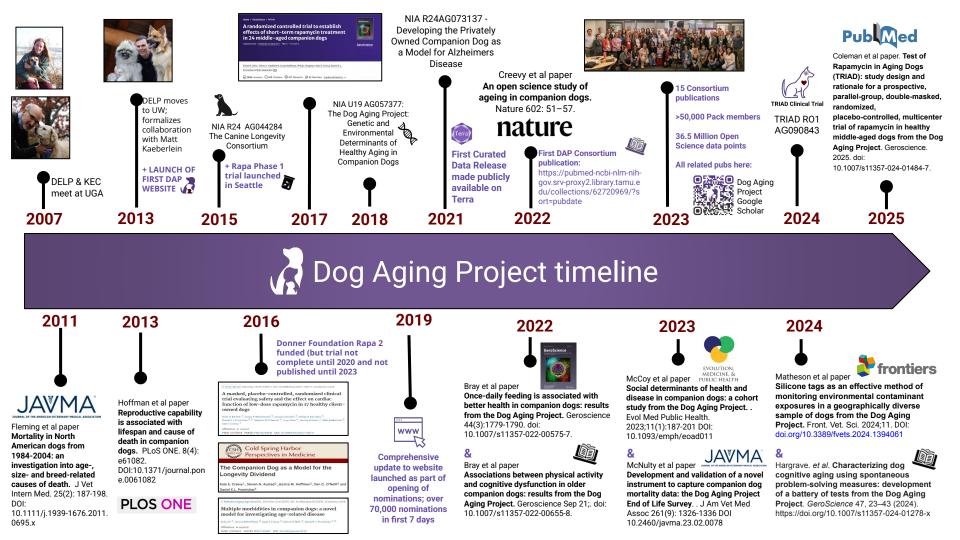
## THERE ARE MANY EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY SCIENCE PROJECTS, BUT OUR FOCUS TODAY WILL BE...

# Dog Aging Project

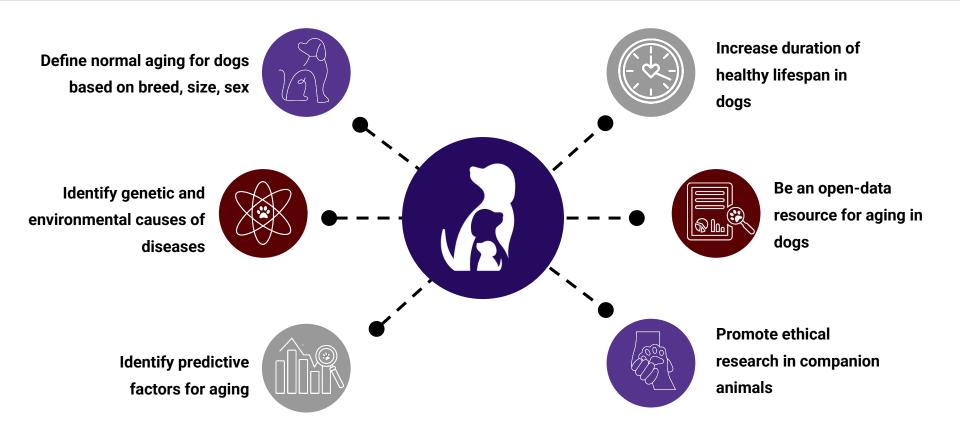
Longer, healthier lives. Together.



# WHAT IS THE DOG AGING PROJECT?



## **GOALS OF THE DAP**



# HOW DOES THE DOG Aging project Work?

# **OUR MEMBERS**

# **COHORTS**

- Main Pack: 50,000 +
- Foundation Cohort: 6,054
- Precision Cohort: 1,000
- TRIAD Cohort: Goal 580 (still enrolling!)

## TOTAL ENROLLMENT AS OF 1/1/2025: 50,188 DOGS



## WHAT DOES BEING A DAP MEMBER ENTAIL?



(1st survey takes about 2 hours)

#### Surveys

- Health status, physical activity,
- environment, behavior, etc.
  - 0 On enrollment, annual updates
- Cognitive status



electronic medical records We'll ask you if you want to upload

your records on an annual basis.)

#### **Digital Medical Record Sharing**

• Optional - However, for cohort consideration, it is needed.



#### **Annual At-Home Activities**

- Cognitive activities
- Mobility activities



## no changes to lifestyle

NO additional veterinary visits,

• Our members in the general pack live their normal lives at home from start to finish!

Are similar to science seminars and are

hosted on the DAP YouTube channel

#### Other cohorts have additional activities

- Precision: yearly blood sampling
- TRIAD: to discuss later

Pack Appreciation Events



# **WHO CAN ENROLL?**

# **ANYONE IN THE UNITED STATES!**

- No age limits, no breed requirements, no health requirements
  - Only limit is 1 dog per household at a time!
- Breed breakdown: 50/50 purebred/mixed
  - Only 34 borzoi at this time
  - Lab, golden retriever, GSD top 3



# **WHO HANDLES THIS SURVEY DATA?**



#### WE'RE AN INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH TEAM!

We have a mix of experts from a wide range of fields. Our team includes veterinarians, aging researchers, ethicists, epidemiologists, and more.

# Our Founders



Kate Creevy

Daniel Promislow Matt Kaeberlein

#### **Main Headquarters**



Researchers all across the country: Virginia Tech, University of Georgia, Colorado State, and many more!

**Members include:** veterinarians, MDs, PhD candidates, students, laboratory staff, and more!

# **WHO ANALYZES THE DATA?**





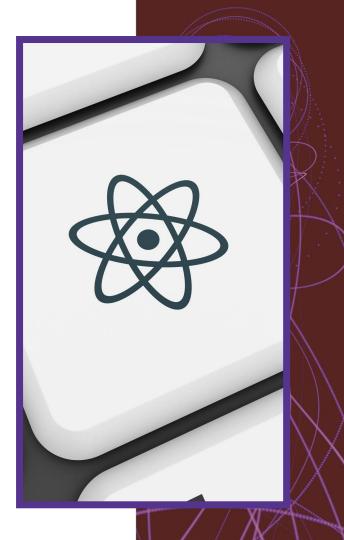
Our data is open-source and released annually for use by anyone interested



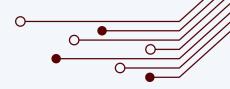
As a community science project, our data is collected by the owners, and it is important to us for them to have access to it if they want



Other researchers/doctors can analyze our data and collaborate with us as well



# WHAT HAPPENS ONCE THE DATA IS ANALYZED?





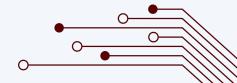
All publications using DAP data are open-access, available to anyone free of charge



73 total publications as of this presentation with many more currently in preparation



pubs.dogagingproject.org









# THE INCITING QUESTION...



#### Daniel Promislow - aging biologist/geneticist

- Science magazine article regarding the genetics of size in dogs
  - Sparked the question: can we figure out why small dogs live longer than large dogs?



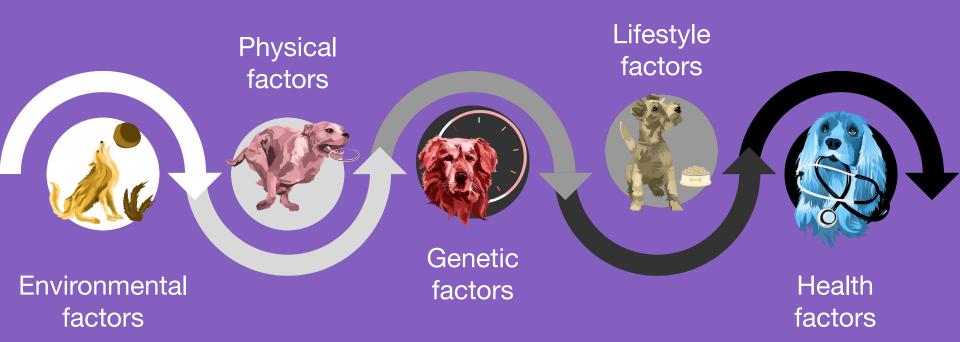
This prompted the connection with Kate Creevy (veterinarian), who came together to start studying aging in dogs

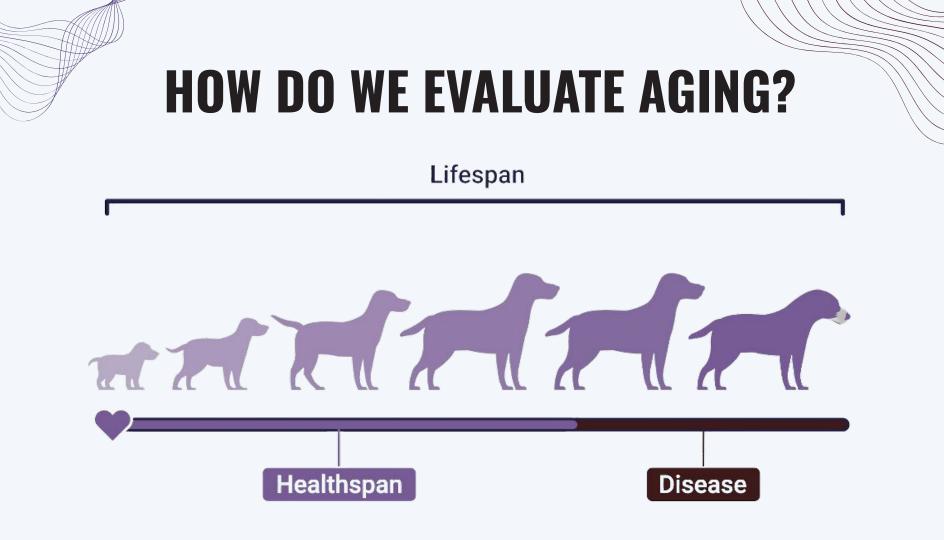


While we don't have a definitive answer to this question, it led to the framework of this project!



# **AGING IS MULTIFACTORIAL**



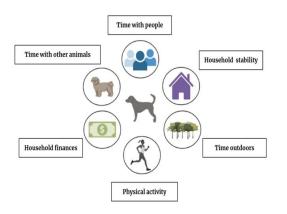


## HOW DO WE EVALUATE HEALTHSPAN? (healthy, active, and feeling good)

## Survey Data

Survey data regarding:

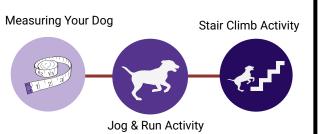
- Disease onset/severity
- Physical activity levels
- Cognitive function



### **Physical Activities**

#### Mobility testing

- Measuring Your Dog
- Jog & Run Activity
- Stair Climb Activity



## **Cognitive Activities**

#### Cognitive tests

- 1-2-3 Treat Activity
- Treat Hide and Seek
   Activity



# THE COMPANION DOG AS AN AGING MODEL



Most of what we know about aging comes from laboratory species

• Yeast, worms, flies, mice

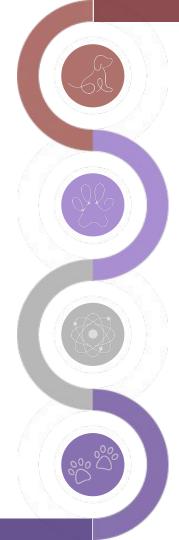


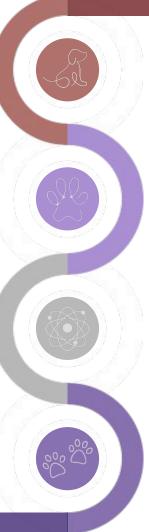
Companion dogs and humans age very similarly, albeit over different time spans

- Variable life expectancy
- Similar functional declines with age
- Similar diseases
- Many parallels in the treatment/healthcare system



The major difference: Dogs age 7-10 times faster than humans





# THE **COMPANION** DOG AS AN AGING MODEL



## Companion dogs share our environments

The same air, the same allergens, the same pollutants, etc
 This cannot be replicated in a laboratory



## Our dogs are more than just pets - they're family

• This dedication to dogs and dedication to improving their health and life, allowing us to work with extremely committed and engaged community scientists







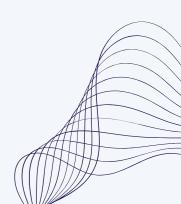








# PUBLICATIONS / IMPORTANT FINDINGS



## Cross-sectional survey of 43,517 dogs in the Dog Aging Project identifies owner-reported lifetime prevalence and characteristics of gastrointestinal disease



Evaluation of owner-reported surveys over a 3 year period - 43,000+ dogs!



30% of owners reported at least 1 GI disease

- Infectious GI disease [parasites, bacteria, viruses] (17%)
- Chronic diarrhea (3%)
- Foreign body ingestion, anal sac impaction, pancreatitis (2%)
- Inflammatory GI disease, chronic vomiting, acute hemorrhagic diarrhea syndrome (1%)
- All others <1%



# The 30% were more likely to report probiotic use or nonprescription GI medications

 Indicated that owners are willing to change lifestyle practices to accommodate GI disorders > J Am Vet Med Assoc. 2024 Sep 18;262(12):1-9. doi: 10.2460/javma.24.05.0306. Print 2024 Dec 1.

Cross-sectional survey of 43,517 dogs in the Dog Aging Project identifies owner-reported lifetime prevalence and characteristics of gastrointestinal disease

Sarah M Schmid <sup>1</sup>, Jessica M Hoffman <sup>2</sup>, Emily N Gould <sup>3</sup>, Alaina Moon <sup>4</sup>, Kate E Creevy <sup>5</sup>

Affiliations + expand PMID: 39293476 DOI: 10.2460/javma.24.05.0306 Free article

#### Abstract

**Objective:** To evaluate the prevalence of and characteristics associated with owner-reported gastrointestinal (GI) disease in companion dogs within the US.

Methods: Cross-sectional owner-reported survey study of 43,517 dogs enrolled in the DAP between December 26, 2019, and December 31, 2022. Dogs were grouped on the basis of having an ownerreported GI disorder (ORGID) versus not having that ORGID at any point in their history (control group). Multivariable logistic regression analysis was used to estimate the association between dog characteristics and ORGIDs with prevalence ORS (PORs).

Results: Of the 43,517 dogs in the DAP Pack, 30,677 (70%) had no history of ORGIDs and 12,840 (30%) had at least 1 ORGID. The most common ORGIDs included infectious diseases (7,580 of 43,517 (17%)), chronic diarrhea (1,316 (3%)), foreign bodies (1,086 (2%)), anal sac impactions (1,031 (2%)), pancreatitis (867 (2%)), inflammatory GI disease (615 (1%)), chronic vomiting (519 (1%)), and acute hemorrhagic diarrhea syndrome (388 [1%)). Compared to controls, dogs with noninfectious ORGIDs had greater odds of having a history of being castrated (POR, 2.55; 95% CI, 2.29 to 2.85), underweight (POR, 1.58; 95% CI, 1.70), or fed primarily canned food (POR, 2.51; 95% CI, 2.21 to 2.85) or receiving probiotics (POR, 1.69; 95% CI, 1.58 to 1.81) or nonprescription GI medications (POR, 4.06; 95% CI, 3.20 to 4.33).



# Dog and owner demographics impact dietary choices in Dog Aging Project cohort



Owner-reported survey data: 40,000+ dogs over a 3 year period



82% feed commercial kibble 89% feed a consistent diet



#### Differences

- Commercial kibble vs. home-cooked
  - Younger owners tend to feed more kibble
  - Smaller, purebred dogs with reported diseases eat home-cooked diets more frequently
- Raw diets
  - Most commonly fed to purebred, intact, high activity dogs
    - Service dogs: 10% ate raw

These findings are purely descriptive - we cannot make claims about health, benefits, risks based on this study; simply it better helps us understand the dietary choices in our population and can pave the way for future studies looking at health outcomes based on diet types

	( Proving Antice   MartAntice ) Dog and owner demographics impact dietary choices in Dog Aging Project cohort	Open access
	Janice S. O'Brien DVM, MPH, DACVPM 🔍 M. Katherine Tolbert DVM, PhD, DACVBM 🦁, Dog Aging Project Consortiam, and View Moce +	Reprints and Permissions
711.	D0I: https://doi.org/10.2460/javma.24.05.0358	Download PDP
	Volume/tose: Volume 242: Issue 12; Received: 01.0m 2024 (Acopted: 23.04.2024) Distine Publication Date: 14.Aug 2024	
	ABSTRACT FULL TEXT FOF SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL METRICS FUBMED	
	Abstract OBJECTIVE To decrease the demographic factors of ewners and their dogs associated with ewner feeding choices and the regularity with which those detr population of dogs. METHODS	s were fed to a US-based
	This cross-sectional analysis examined 40,437 Initial survey responses from U5 dog owners participating in the Dog Aging Project. The survey 2,2020,to Deember 31, 2022, and included primary and secondary dist component types and dog and owner demographic variables. Each de compared accounts dist type chickes that by 2 thes of independence.	
	RESULTS RESULTS in a commonly program and and a set of an above of an above of an above of an above of a set of an above of an area rise. Other amongoing the data is process, and address in rest and a result and and an above provement and a provide a set of a contrast with other above of an above of a set to be an above provement and a program above of a set of a provement and a set of a set	ic factors (size, neuter status, s. Home-cooked diets were
	CONCLUSIONS Demographic valuables are associated with statistically significant differences in oliet types selected. Nuction studies examining health outco healing of different diet types should account for these factors during design or aways is noter to avoid bas. An epidemiological tool, the di resented.	
	CLINICAL RELEVANCE This information will help clinicians in their discussions with clients about per nutrition.	
ed		

# Clippers are superior to scissors in the collection of hair for chemical analysis in companion dogs



**Goal:** evaluate the safest and most efficient method for sampling hair/fur



#### Razors vs. clippers vs. scissors

• Evaluated: collection time, restraint needed, long vs. short hair



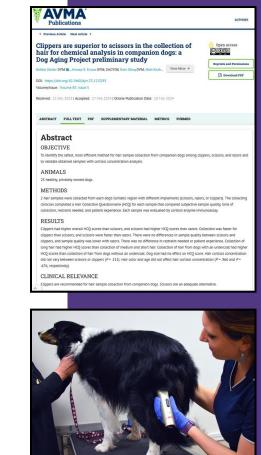
### Clippers faster than scissors, scissors faster than razors

• However, no differences in sample quality, restraint needed



# Longer hair was found to be easier to sample than shorter hair

While these findings may not make a huge difference in how we take care of our pets, it can be helpful for other veterinarians to understand the most efficient ways of sample collection to minimize stress and maximize possible benefits



# Lifetime prevalence of owner-reported medical conditions in the 25 most common dog breeds in the Dog Aging Project pack



**Goal:** estimate the lifetime prevalence of medical conditions in purebred dogs (25 most common) vs. mixed-breed dogs



Owner-reported survey data for 27,000+ dogs (~13,000 purebred, ~13,000 mixed-breed)



Purebred dogs overall more likely to have no reported medical conditions than mixed-breed dogs

- Golden Retriever, Poodle, Australian Shepherd, Border Collie, Siberian Husky
- The one exception: Greyhounds less likely to have no reported medical conditions



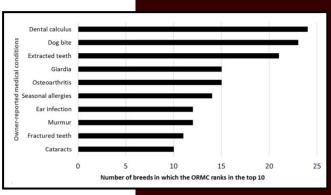
Outcome: allows us to better understand common diseases in specific breeds, which can allow for targeted prevention in the future



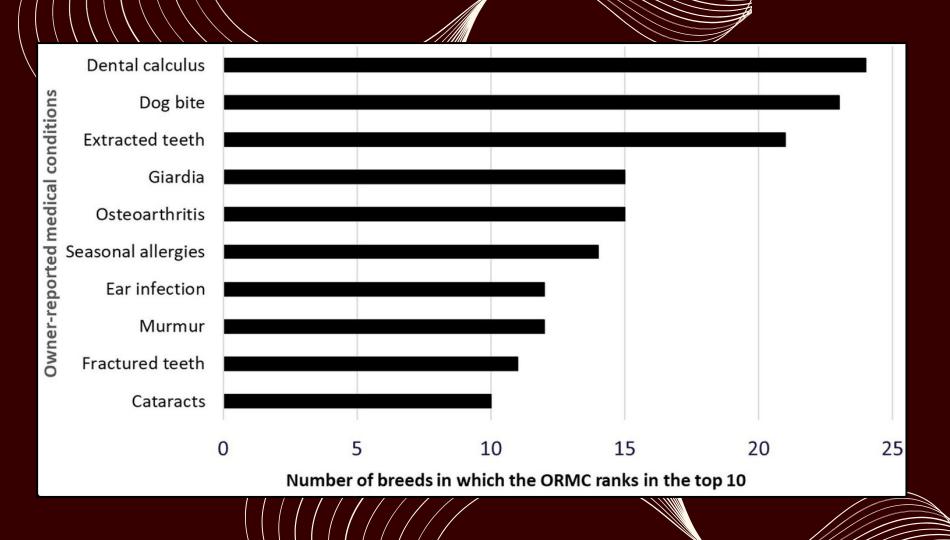
> Front Vet Sci. 2023 Nov 3:10:1140417. doi: 10.3389/fvets.2023.1140417. eCollection 2023

Lifetime prevalence of owner-reported medical conditions in the 25 most common dog breeds in the Dog Aging Project pack

Kiersten K Forsyth <sup>1</sup>, Brianah M McCoy <sup>2</sup>, Sarah M Schmid <sup>3</sup>, Daniel E L Promislow <sup>4</sup> <sup>5</sup>, Noah Snyder-Mackler <sup>2</sup> <sup>6</sup> <sup>7</sup>; DAP Consortium; Kate E Creevy <sup>8</sup>







### Analysis of 2,570 responses to Dog Aging Project End of Life Survey demonstrates that euthanasia is associated with cause of death but not age



**Goal:** evaluate factors associated with passing (euthanasia vs. unassisted death)



2,570 End of Life Survey responses



85% of dogs were euthanized, 15% unassisted death

- Most frequent cause of death was illness/disease (58%)
- Most frequent reason for euthansia: pain/suffering (49%)



Euthanasia associated with lower quality of life scores but NOT age

• This tells us that age in and of itself is not necessarily a disease, and that quality of life is a bigger factor in a decision to euthanize



**Outcome:** better understand factors that are associated with manner of death as a way to provide better end-of-life care to pets and owners

> J Am Vet Med Assoc. 2023 Sep 28;262(2):1-10. doi: 10.2460/javma.23.07.0366. Print 2024 Feb 1.

Analysis of 2,570 responses to Dog Aging Project End of Life Survey demonstrates that euthanasia is associated with cause of death but not age

Elizabeth B Pearson <sup>1</sup>, Jessica M Hoffman <sup>2</sup>, Rachel L Melvin <sup>1</sup>, Kellyn E McNulty <sup>1</sup>; Dog Aging Project Consortium; Kate E Creevy <sup>1</sup>, Audrey Ruple <sup>3</sup>

Affiliations + expand PMID: 37770016 PMCID: PMC10996864 DOI: 10.2460/javma.23.07.0366

#### Abstract

Objective: The Dog Aging Project End of Life Survey was used to evaluate factors associated with manner of death (euthanasia vs unassisted death), including cause of death (CoD), reason for euthanasia (RFE) if performed, medical symptoms, old age characteristics, and perimortem quality of life (QoL).

Sample: Responses collected between the End of Life Survey launch (January 20, 2021) through December 31, 2021, from 2,570 participants whose dogs died.

Methods: Response frequencies were described. Associations between manner of death and medical symptoms or old age characteristics were evaluated using logistic regression. Factors associated with RFE were evaluated using multinomial regression. The effects of CoD, age at death, and QoL on the frequency of euthanasia as the manner of death were evaluated using multivariate logistic regression.

Results: 2,195 (85.4%) dogs were euthanized, and 375 (14.6%) experienced unassisted death. The most frequent owner-reported CoD was illness/disease (n = 1,495 (58.1%)). The most frequently reported RFL was pain/sulfering (n = 1,080 (49.2% of those euthanized). As age increased, RFL was more likely to be "poor QoL" than any other response. In a multivariate regression including CoD, chronologic age, and QoL, euthanasia as the manner of death was not significantly associated with age.



# **THE EVENTUAL GOAL**

Better understanding of dog aging



Better chance to intervene and extend lifespan + healthspan in dogs



# TEST OF RAPAMYCIN IN AGING DOGS

# WHAT TYPES OF STUDIES EXIST?

#### **OBSERVATIONAL TRIAL**

- No interventions (medications, devices, treatments) performed on participants
- Monitor subjects in normal settings to answer questions
- Example: Lung cancer in smokers vs. non-smokers; DAP

#### **CLINICAL TRIAL**

Commonly called "Interventional Trial"

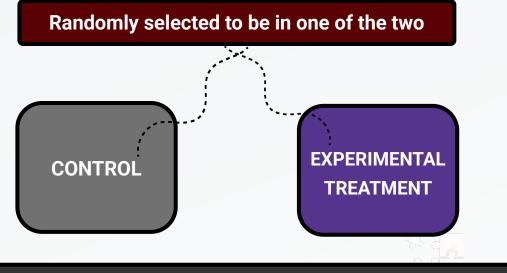
- LA
- Evaluate the effect of a medication, device, treatment, etc. on participants
- If we "intervene," what changes occur?
- Example: TRIAD!





# **HOW DO MOST CLINICAL TRIALS WORK?**

2 groups: control (no treatment or known treatment) and experimental treatment



Everything else is the same between the two groups - the only difference is the treatment - that way the effect of the treatment alone can be evaluated

# WHAT IS TRIAD?

Double-blind, placebo-controlled clinical trial of the medicine rapamycin

### WHAT DOES RAPAMYCIN DO?



#### High dose (humans)

- Cancer treatment
- Preventing organ transplant rejection

#### Low Dose

- Increased lifespan (yeast, nematodes, fruit flies, mice)
- Increased healthspan (mice)
- $^{\circ}~$  Reduced incidence of cancer
- Improved cognitive function
- Reduced eye disease

- Improved muscle function
- Improved immune system function
- Improved heart function



### **IS RAPAMYCIN SAFE?**



Most adverse effects in humans are temporary and seen at high doses

- Elevated triglyceride levels
- Elevated blood sugar

- Mouth ulcers
- Skin issues



#### Low dose in dogs - only mild, temporary side effects seen

- Decreased appetite
- Vomiting/diarrhea

- Decreased platelet numbers
- Elevated triglycerides

Our study's dosing is less frequent and lower dose than the doses at which severe adverse effects were seen

## WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF TRIAD?

#### AIMS OF TRIAD:

- The **primary objective** of the study is to determine whether rapamycin increases lifespan in companion dogs.
- The **secondary endpoints** are designed to assess the ability of rapamycin to improve healthspan by enhancing functional measures of aging and reducing age-related disease burden.

#### ENROLLMENT TARGET: 580 DOGS



## WHO MAY QUALIFY FOR TRIAD?

At

At least 7 years of age



44 -121 pounds (20-55kg)

Spayed/neutered



Good temperament (can tolerate diagnostic testing without sedation/aggression)

In good health

BLOG POST:

Inside TRIAD: A Deeper Dive into the Test of Rapamycin In Aging Dogs

#### WHAT DOES PARTICIPATING IN TRIAD ENTAIL?



Visit a clinical site every 6 months



Participate for a total of 3 years



Give your dog a heartworm preventive



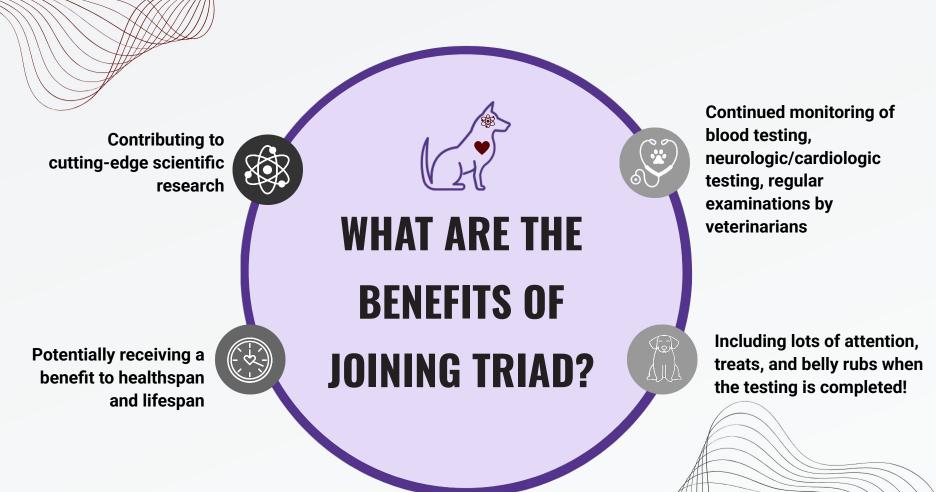
Keep your dog up-to-date on vaccines



Administer the study medication weekly



Complete all surveys and activities



## HOW TO GET INVOLVED?







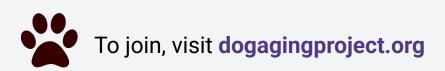
## BECOME A MEMBER OF THE DAP PACK!

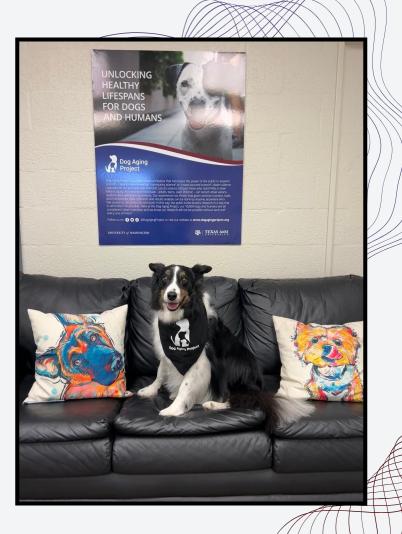


All dogs are welcome, regardless of age, breed, health status, etc.



Completely free, all from the comfort of your own home





## **GET SCREENED FOR TRIAD!**

This will happen automatically on enrollment to the DAP Pack

Prior to enrollment, you can do the "TRIAD Fast Track" survey to check initial eligibility

dogagingproject.org/TRIAD

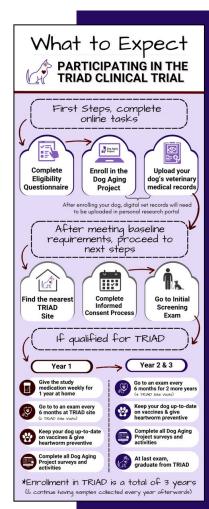
#### As a reminder:

- 7 years
- 20-55 kg (44-121 lbs)
- Good temperament

- In general good health
- Spayed/neutered



Dog Aging Project



### **CURRENT TRIAD SITES**



### **SPREAD THE WORD!**

The more dogs we enroll, the more we can learn and the more we can help!



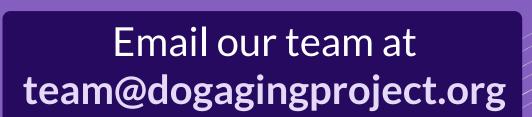
Word of mouth is huge let your friends, neighbors, local communities know!



SPREAD THE WORD!

At: dogagingproject.org/project-resources





Questions?

Agin