Due to the fact that dogs and cats age much faster than humans—one year for a human is roughly five to seven years for a dog or cat—it is especially important that pet owners understand the potential factors that may impact how long their pets live. The lifespan of a dog or cat can be impacted by various factors including genetics, whether or not a dog or cat is spayed or neutered, the amount of preventative veterinary care received, and, of course, breed type and size. The geographic location where a pet lives may also impact its life or be lifespan due to preventative diseases plaguing certain parts of the United States. Preventable diseases such as heartworm disease and Lyme disease are the overwhelming and early killer of our four-legged friends in certain areas of the country such as the Northwest (heartworm) and the Southeast (Lyme disease). Heartworm infection is one of the top three conditions or diagnoses for pets seen in Banfeld hospitals in the Southern states including Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, among others. These three Southern states had the shortest lifespan for dogs in 2012—Louisiana and Mississippi had the longest for cats in 2012.

Lifespan estimates are based on age at euthanasia for Banfeld patients 1-15 years of age.

**Breed Chart**

Dogs and cats can be prone to certain diseases based on their breed. For dogs, breed size can also put them at an increased risk for certain diseases based on their breed size. As a result of their shorter lifespan, giant breed dogs can be expected to reach their senior years at 6 years of age rather than 10 years of age, which means they are likely to develop aging diseases much earlier in life than smaller breeds. As such, breed and breed size are important factors that may impact how long their pets live. The lifespan of a dog or cat can be impacted by various factors including genetics, whether or not a dog or cat is spayed or neutered, the amount of preventative veterinary care received, and, of course, breed type and size. The geographic location where a pet lives may also impact its life or be lifespan due to preventative diseases plaguing certain parts of the United States. Preventable diseases such as heartworm disease and Lyme disease are the overwhelming and early killer of our four-legged friends in certain areas of the country such as the Northwest (heartworm) and the Southeast (Lyme disease). Heartworm infection is one of the top three conditions or diagnoses for pets seen in Banfeld hospitals in the Southern states including Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, among others. These three Southern states had the shortest lifespan for dogs in 2012—Louisiana and Mississippi had the longest for cats in 2012.

**Spay & Neuter**

While it is not possible to predict the lifespan of a pet, there are many preventable diseases and conditions that impact a pet’s overall health and well-being, which may influence lifespan. Some of the most significant findings in this year’s report include the impact spaying or neutering has on a pet’s lifespan.

**States with the Shortest Lifespan**

of the 50 states in which Banfeld has a hospital.

**Looking Ahead**

Banfeld Pet Hospital is committed to improving the health and well-being of pets everywhere, and we are equally dedicated to uncovering the factors that threaten their lifespan.

The State of Pet Health 2013 Report features an exclusive look at the lifespan of both dogs and cats and provides additional insight into the overall health of our pet population. Although considerable differences in lifespan were highlighted in comparisons of pets by year, sex, reproductive status, breed size and state of residence, the factors underlying these differences remain to be identified.

In our ongoing commitment to improving the health and well-being of pets, the BARK team is following up on this report’s findings by thoroughly investigating factors that might influence lifespan in dogs and cats—factors such as body condition that, when effectively managed, may help keep pets with their owners longer. We look forward to sharing the results of these studies with pet owners and the veterinary community in early 2014.

For a state-by-state interactive look at pet health, visit StateOfPetHealth.com and follow us on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.
Welcome to Banfield Pet Hospital’s State of Pet Health 2013 Report—the only report of its kind to capture and analyze the medical data from nearly 2.2 million dogs and 460,000 cats. As the largest veterinary practice in the world, Banfield operates more than 800 hospitals in 43 states, and more than 13,000 associates—including 2,600 licensed veterinarians—work at Banfield. As such, Banfield has a unique understanding of the health of companion animals. Through our extensive commitment to innovation, our practice has created this groundbreaking report, now in its third year.

### about banfield

As a great love, our focus is making a better world for pets by delivering high-quality veterinary medicine and providing preventive care. We are the leader in innovative pet healthcare programs, such as Optimum Wellness Plans—packages of preventive care services at an affordable price. Banfield believes preventive care improves the quality and longevity of a pet’s life by reducing the risk of developing serious, costly and sometimes fatal diseases—many of which are preventable or, without treatment, can become chronic. This is why Banfield emphasizes the importance of twice-annual comprehensive examinations and a partnership between pet owners and their veterinarians to identify changes in a pet’s overall health and well-being. We believe that regular preventive care and early-disease diagnosis will positively impact a pet’s health and lifespan.

Banfield’s veterinarians and professionals use PetHealth, Banfield’s proprietary state-of-the-art electronic medical records system, to collect data from every pet cared for in Banfield hospitals. Information is downloaded daily to the medical database at Banfield’s main campus in Portland, Ore. Data are then analyzed by Banfield’s internal research team, Banfield Applied Research & Knowledge (BARK).

Banfield’s commitment to providing high-quality veterinary care is grounded in evidence-based medicine—this is supported by BARK’s team of researchers, many of whom are veterinarians, and are dedicated to population-based research. The BARK team analyzes the medical data of more than 7 million pet visits at Banfield hospitals each year to develop insights into diseases affecting pets. Findings of the studies they conduct are shared with veterinarians and the public through various avenues, including continuing education materials, scientific journals, the Banfield Journal (an online publication), and the annual State of Pet Health Report.

Our commitment also extends to forming partnerships that will benefit pets and pet owners. This philosophy led PetSmart, America’s largest retailer of pet-related products and services, and Banfield to collect data from every pet cared for in Banfield hospitals. Data are then analyzed to form insights into diseases affecting pets.

### 2012 at a glance

The average lifespan of a cat in 2012 was 12 years—a 10% increase from 2002.

2 of the 5 states with the shortest lifespans for dogs have the highest number of unneutered and unspayed dogs.

- **Mississippi** and **Oregon** are tied for the highest percentage of unneutered and unspayed cats (or 1 in 12 of the cats in the state are not spayed or neutered) and these are among the states with the shortest lifespans for cats. But in **Montana** and **Colorado**, the states with the longest lifespans, that number is down to 8% or 1 in 12.

- **Mississippi** and **Oregon** are tied for the highest percentage of unneutered and unspayed dogs (or 1 in 5) of the dogs in the States with the shortest lifespans for dogs. But in **Montana** and **Colorado**, the states with the longest lifespans, that number is down to 8% or 1 in 12.

- **Mississippi** and **Oregon** are tied for the highest percentage of geriatric cats at 24%.

- **Mississippi** and **Oregon** are tied for the highest percentage of geriatric dogs at 13%.

### common diseases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kidney disease</td>
<td>The most common kidney condition is kidney failure due to injury or damage to the kidneys. Both dogs and cats can develop kidney failure, usually as a result of disease or injury. Kidney failure is irreversible, and treatment is mostly supportive.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diabetes mellitus</td>
<td>Diabetes mellitus is a serious and common condition in which pets have elevated blood sugar levels due to problems with insulin production or function. Pet owners’ most common concerns are whether pets display hyperglycemia (blood sugar is too high) or hypoglycemia (blood sugar is too low). Blood glucose monitoring is needed to diagnose and manage the disease, requiring lifelong treatment and monitoring.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heartworm disease</td>
<td>Heartworm disease is a serious but preventable condition that is caused by Dirofilaria immitis—the dog heartworm—and Dirofilaria tenuis—which can cause disease in cats. Heartworm disease affects dogs and cats and breeds and is transmitted from infected to uninfected pets. Heartworm disease is fatal if not treated and often involves a combination of bloodworms, heartworms, and other parasites. Simultaneous infection with other parasites can also affect heartworm disease.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental disease</td>
<td>Dental disease is the most common disease in dogs and cats, affecting 91% of dogs and 81% of cats over the age of 3. Dental disease includes any health issues affecting the mouth, including inflammation, tumors, periodontal disease, and gingivitis, among others.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How does your state rank in pet health? Learn more about the common and chronic diseases and conditions affecting pets in the U.S. as well as how each state ranks at [StatenPetHealth.com](http://www.StatenPetHealth.com).