

4 March 2003



WARNING DOG LOVERS: WHAT YOU NAME YOUR PET MAY AFFECT ITS HEALTH

In the week that Britain goes dog crazy, mutts of all shapes, sizes and colours with weird and wonderful names parading for the judges at Crufts, AXA Insurance is warning dog lovers that the name you give your pet may be linked to how many times you take it to the vet.

Call your pet Rafferty, BJ or Charlie Brown and you can expect problems. In fact, your dog could be visiting the vet up to 10 times more often than if you choose a name like Mable, Becks or even Boozer.

You might consider calling your dog Lucky, to give him a better chance in life but unfortunately it won't help.

According to AXA's database Lucky was only the 56th most popular name choice and is ranked almost 1800th most lucky so far as health is concerned. With at least two illnesses incurring veterinary fees during the course of his life, perhaps Lucky isn't that lucky afterall?

Commenting on the research, David Jones, manager, AXA Pet Insurance said: "From the sample of almost 200,000 names there does appear to be a clear link between what you call your pet and its chances of having a veterinary fees claim. With claims routinely running into hundreds of pounds and increasingly into thousands, it really does make sense to arrange pet insurance for just a few pounds a month."

And the same goes for moggies...

Owners who call their cat by a more adventurous name such as Rex, Rebel or Sparticus are more likely to have a veterinary bill for them.

In fact it is almost 6 times more likely than owners who opt for the much safer cat names such as Elmo, Coke and not surprisingly Dodger!

Ends

Notes to editor

Research conducted by Jardine Lloyd Thompson Pet Insurance for AXA Insurance involving a sample of 183,177 records.

AXA Pet Insurance starts at £5.48 per month for cats and £7.31 per month for dogs. For details please call 0800 316 9038 or go to the website www.axapet.co.uk

For further information please contact Rachel West at AXA Insurance on 020 7369 4293