

Rottweilers May Uncover Secrets to Longevity

A new study shows that Rottweilers demonstrating exceptional longevity are less likely to die of cancer than dogs with usual longevity.

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Rottweilers may hold the key to uncovering the secrets to exceptional longevity (i.e., those 13 years or older, equal to a 100-year-old human).

A new study found that Rottweilers demonstrating exceptional longevity were much less likely to die of cancer than were dogs with usual longevity. This parallels human studies demonstrating that centenarians are much less likely to succumb to cancer than people who die in their 70's or 80's.

Comparing old dogs to those with usual longevity might reveal lifestyle choices and genes that regulate cancer resistance.

Study sponsor Procter & Gamble Pet Care, the makers of Iams and Eukanuba dog food, has partnered with David Waters, DVM, Ph.D., the director of The Murphy Cancer Foundation, also a study sponsor, on an Exceptional Longevity Database to identify unique environmental and nutritional consistencies among older dogs and how these factors can contribute to cancer resistance and prolonged life span.

The study, "Lucky #13: Rottweilers as Guide Dogs to the Fountain of Youth," will take detailed life history information from questionnaires, as well as biological samples of participating dogs. To date, the program has identified 125 dogs for the study.