

Answering 'The Doodle Dilemma': Do Cockapoo, Labradoodle and Cavapoo designer-crossbreeds differ in physical health to their purebred parent breeds?

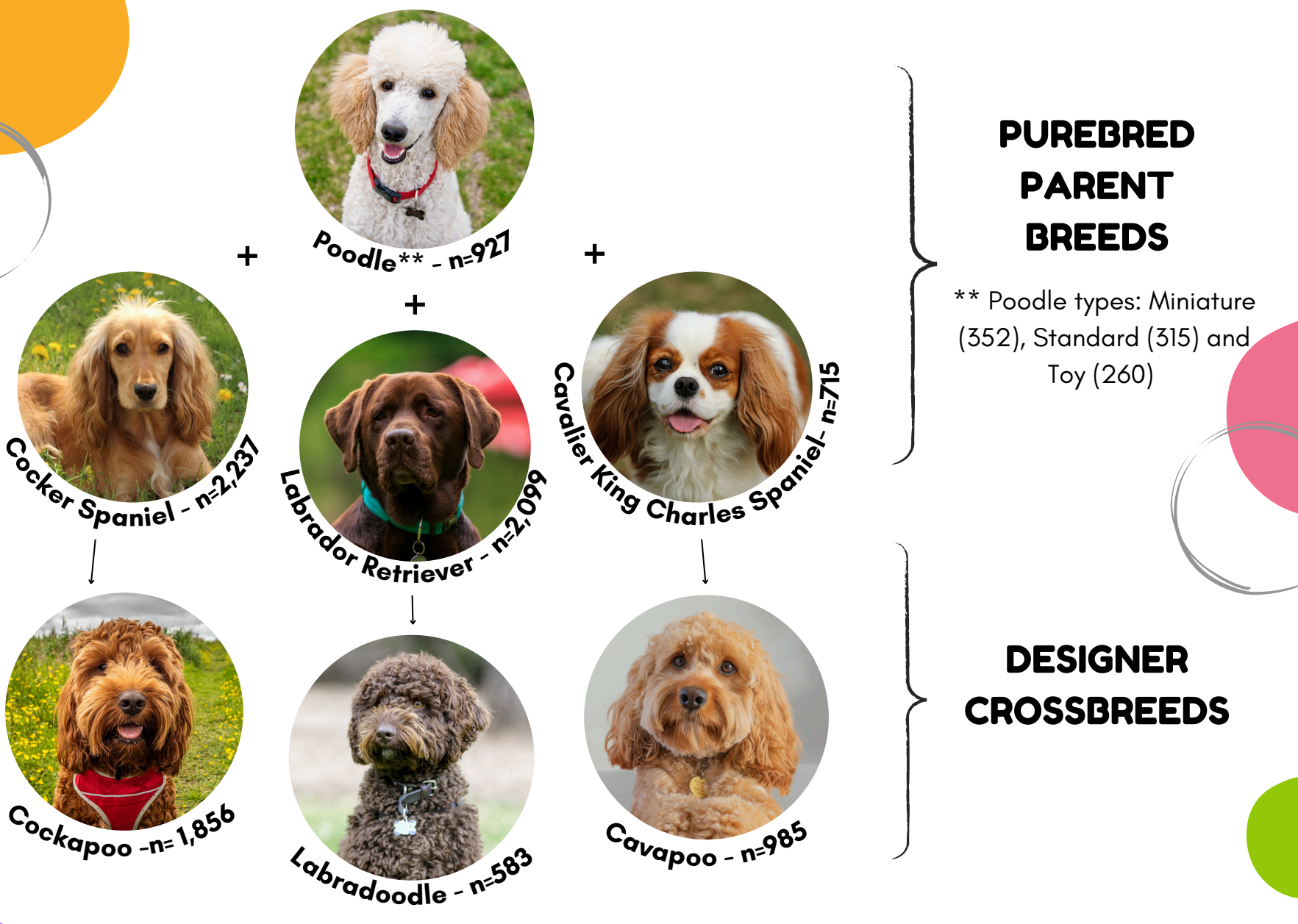


Public desire to own designer-crossbreeds, such as Cockapoos, Labradoodles and Cavapoos, has grown rapidly over the past decade and is often **driven by beliefs** around **better physical health** compared to their purebred parent breeds. However, despite their growing popularity, there is limited information on the relative health of designer-crossbreeds.

To answer this question, this RVC study used a cross-sectional survey of UK owners of three common designer-crossbreeds and their purebred parent breeds to explore whether physical health of these common designer-crossbreeds really does differ to their parental breeds.

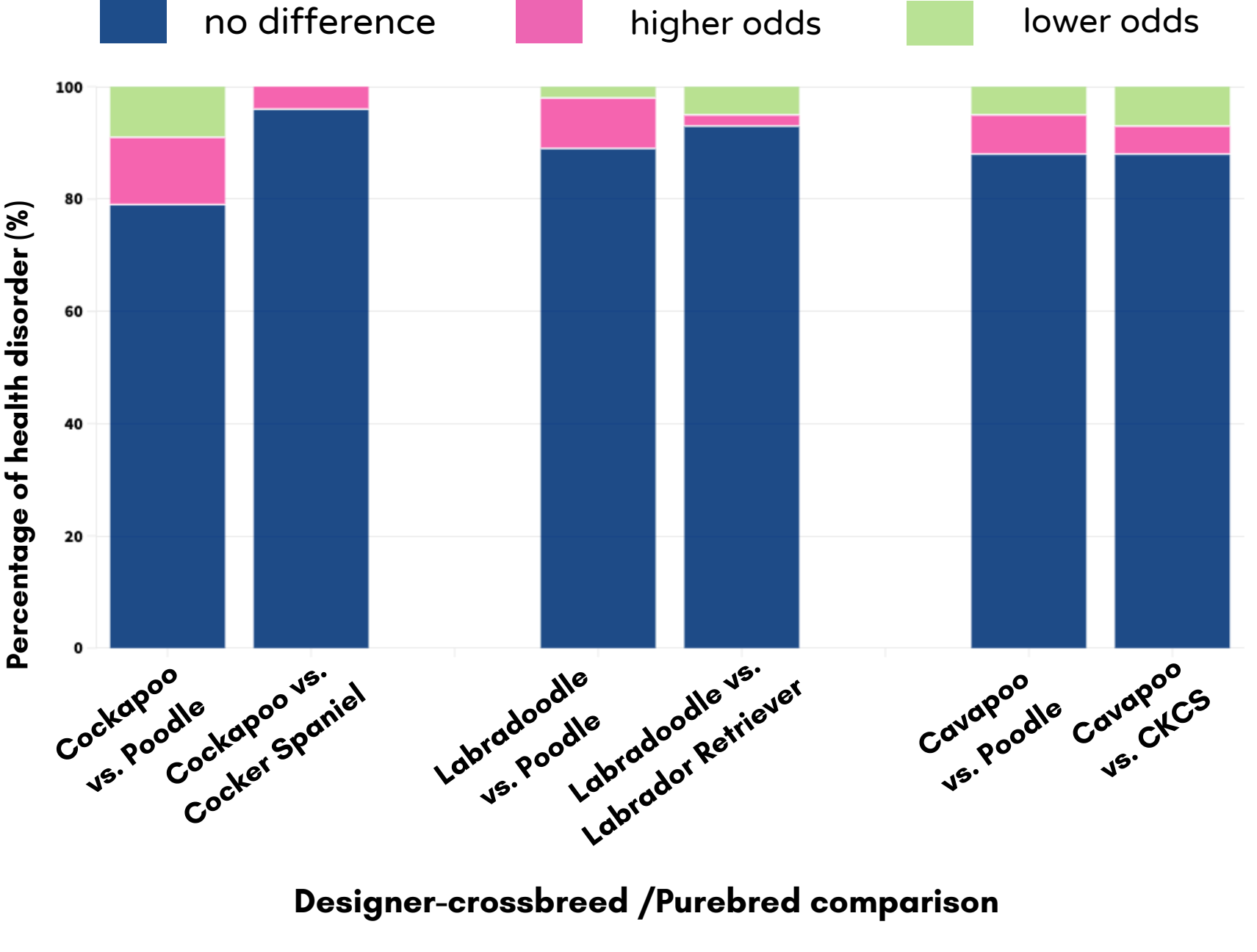
The Study Population

This large study included **9,402** dogs



The risk of **57 common disorders** was compared between the three designer-crossbreeds and their relevant purebred parent breeds. **No significant risk** difference was detected in **86.6%** of the **342 disorder comparisons** between each designer-crossbreed and each of their parent breeds (**57 x 3 x 2 = 342 comparisons**).

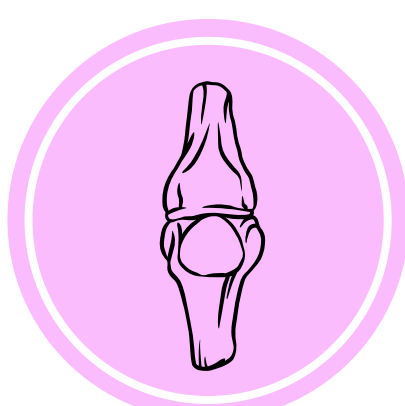
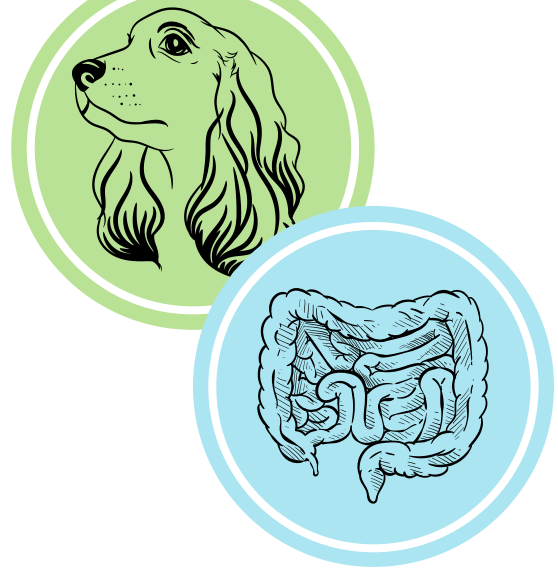
Of the 13.4% health comparisons that did differ, designer-crossbreeds had **higher odds** in **7.0%** (n=24) and **lower odds** in **6.4%** (n=22) of health disorders



Patterns of predisposition

Skin and Intestinal disorders

All three **designer-crossbreeds** had **higher odds** of **ear infection** than their non-Poodle parent breeds. Additionally, all three designer-crossbreeds had **higher odds** **intestinal problems**, such as **vomiting** and **diarrhoea**, compared to Poodles.



Musculoskeletal disorders

Labradoodles and **Cavapoos** had **lower odds** of **patella luxation (slipped knee-cap)** than Poodles.

Implications and Conclusions

The findings do not support commonly-held beliefs of enhanced health in these common designer-crossbreeds that often motivates their purchase.

Raising awareness in prospective owners of common health disorders in designer-crossbreeds could encourage consumer pressure on breeders to prioritise health over aesthetics when deciding which breeds to cross.

Communicating these findings to prospective owners of designer crossbreeds is important to align their expectations regarding potential health issues and veterinary costs with their later reality.

CLICK TO READ FULL STUDY

Bryson GT, O'Neill DG, Brand CL, Belshaw Z, Packer RMA (2024) The doodle dilemma: How the physical health of 'Designer-crossbreed' Cockapoo, Labradoodle and Cavapoo dogs' compares to their purebred progenitor breeds. PLoS ONE 19(8): e0306350. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0306350>