

In each issue of *Today's Veterinary Practice*, **Pet Health by the Numbers** correlates article topics with statistics provided by Banfield Pet Hospital (banfield.com). These statistics are extracted from data collected from the medical records of nearly **2.3 million dogs** and **470,000 cats** presented to more than **850 Banfield Pet Hospitals** in 2013.

Learn more about data collection by reading **Welcome to Pet Health by the Numbers** (January/February 2014 issue) and **Key Findings from the State of Pet Health 2014 Report** (May/June 2014 issue), both available at tvjournal.com.

Tick Prevalence in Dogs & Cats

Article: **Canine Arthropods: Mites & Ticks Recommendations from the Companion Animal Parasite Council** (page 61)
 The following tables outline the prevalence of ticks in dogs and cats presented to Banfield Pet Hospitals in 2013.



Prevalence of Ticks by U.S. Climate Region (2013)

Region	Dogs			Cats		
	Number Presented	Number with Ticks	Percentage with Ticks	Number Presented	Number with Ticks	Percentage with Ticks
Midwest	307,311	2021	0.66%	70,360	112	0.16%
Northeast	299,531	3800	1.27%	74,085	459	0.62%
Northern Plains	100,362	148	0.15%	20,087	8	0.04%
Pacific Northwest	125,105	383	0.31%	39,838	21	0.05%
Southeast	749,357	10,639	1.42%	139,437	550	0.39%
Southern Plains	338,076	4560	1.35%	51,528	76	0.15%
Southwest	404,448	3578	0.88%	73,479	45	0.06%

Region with Greatest Prevalence of Ticks by Patient Age* (2013)

Age	Dogs: Southeast		Cats: Northeast	
	Presented	% with Ticks	Presented	% with Ticks
Total	749,357	1.42%	74,085	0.62%
Juvenile (< 1 year)	184,655	1.81%	18,400	0.44%
Young adult (1–3 years)	192,424	1.37%	17,109	0.83%
Mature adult (3–10 years)	351,335	1.15%	29,090	0.65%
Geriatric (> 10 years)	78,467	1.06%	13,172	0.45%

* NOTE: Age group totals will not match overall totals. Age groups are derived from visit age in 2013; some pets may have been counted in multiple age categories (eg, a pet that visited as a juvenile and then as a young adult in 2013).

Path to Pet Wellness: This dataset confirms that ticks infest pets throughout the United States, and the geographic trends resemble those of previous, similarly conducted surveys.¹ However, these data are generated from point observations in clinic, an approach that does not accurately capture the episodic nature of tick activity. As such, the prevalence values dramatically underrepresent actual tick risk.

Ticks feed for only a few weeks of their 2-year life span. Dogs and cats presenting with a serious, potentially fatal tick-borne disease often do not have a tick attached at examination.^{2,4} Failing to find ticks at a single observation should not be interpreted as absence of infestation risk. Surveys conducted using antibodies to tick-borne disease agents as a proxy for past tick infestations provide a more accurate estimate of risk, and document higher regional prevalence at 0.9% to 13.3%.⁵

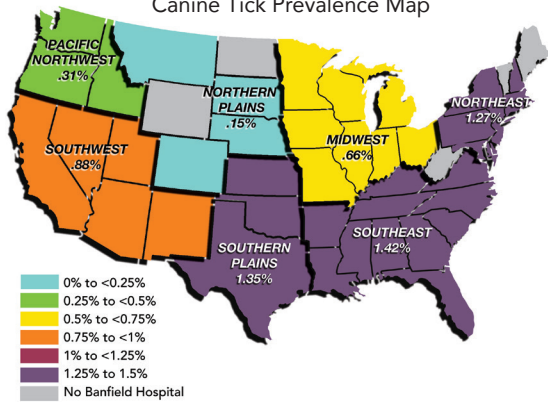
The Companion Animal Parasite Council recommends consistent use of tick control on pets to protect them from ticks and tick-borne infections.⁶

–Susan E. Little, DVM, PhD, Diplomate ACVM (Parasitology)

References

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Canine Tick Prevalence Map



Feline Tick Prevalence Map

