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Science - Reuters

Lawn Chemicals Linked to Dog Cancer - U.S. Study 

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WASHINGTON (Reuters) - A study that links lawn chemicals to bladder cancer in Scottish terriers could help shed light on whether they cause cancer in some people, U.S. researchers said on Tuesday.

Purdue University researchers surveyed 83 owners of Scottish terriers whose pets had recently been diagnosed with bladder cancer for their report, published in the Journal of the American Veterinary Medicine Association.

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"The risk ... was found to be between four and seven times more likely in exposed animals," said Larry Glickman, professor of epidemiology and environmental medicine in Purdue's School of Veterinary Medicine.

"While we hope to determine which of the many chemicals in lawn treatments are responsible, we also hope the similarity between human and dog genomes will allow us to find the genetic predisposition toward this form of cancer found in both Scotties and certain people."

Glickman and his colleagues earlier found that Scotties are about 20 times more likely to develop bladder cancer than other breeds.

"These dogs are more sensitive to some factors in their environment," Glickman said in a statement. "As pets tend to spend a fair amount of time in contact with plants treated with herbicides and insecticides, we decided to find out whether lawn chemicals were having any effect on cancer frequency."

The National Cancer Institute ([news](#) - [web sites](#)) says about 38,000 men and 15,000 women are diagnosed with bladder cancer each year. Humans and animals often share genes that can predispose them to cancer.

"If such a gene exists in dogs, it's likely that it exists in a similar location in the human genome," Glickman said. "Finding the dog gene could save years in the search for it in humans and could also help us determine which kids need to stay away from lawn chemicals."

Glickman's team plans to survey children, as well as dogs, in households that have treated lawns and compare the chemicals in their urine samples with those from households with untreated lawns.

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"It's important to find out which lawn chemicals are being taken up by both children and animals," he said.

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