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Scientists change how we calculate dog years – 6th July, 2020

Level 4

Dog lovers have been using the wrong method to calculate their pet's age. Researchers say the practice of finding a dog's age in human years by multiplying by seven is incorrect. They have come up with a new formula that precisely finds out a dog's age. The new method needs more than simple mental arithmetic. It compares the changes of the DNA of dogs and humans. Scientists say DNA analysis is the best way to measure the ageing speed of dogs.

Researchers tested blood from 105 dogs. After some number crunching, they created a graph to show dogs and people age at different rates. A one-year-old dog is similar to a 30-year-old human, while a four-year-old dog is like a 52-year-old. A researcher said: "A nine-month-old dog can have puppies, so we already knew that the 1:7 ratio wasn't an accurate measure of age." He added that different breeds of dog age at different speeds.

Level 5

Dog lovers have been incorrectly calculating their pet's age. They have been working out their dog's age in "human years" by multiplying by seven. However, researchers at the University of California have come up with a new formula. They say it precisely finds out canine age. The new method needs more than simple mental arithmetic to work out a dog's age. It involves comparing the changes of the DNA of dogs and humans. The scientists regard such DNA analysis as the best way to measure the ageing speed of dogs and humans.

The researchers analysed blood samples from 105 Labradors. After some number crunching, they created a graph to show the different rates at which dogs and people age. A one-year-old dog is similar to a 30-year-old human, while a four-year-old dog is like a 52-year-old person. A researcher said when a dog turns seven, its ageing slows. He said this made sense, and that: "A nine-month-old dog can have puppies, so we already knew that the 1:7 ratio wasn't an accurate measure of age." The new formula doesn't fully address the fact that different breeds of dog age at different speeds.

Level 6

For decades, dog lovers have been incorrectly calculating the age of their pet pooches. People have traditionally worked out their dog's age in "human years" by multiplying by seven. However, researchers at the University of California San Diego School of Medicine in the USA have come up with a new formula. They say it more precisely determines canine age. Their new method requires a little more than simple mental arithmetic to work out a dog's age. It involves a comparison of the genomes of dogs and humans. Scientists had to analyse how DNA changes as humans and dogs age. The scientists regard such DNA analysis as the best way to measure the ageing speed of mammals.

The researchers analysed blood samples from 105 Labrador retrievers. After a bit of number crunching, they created a graph to show the different rates at which canines and humans age. They said a one-year-old dog is similar to a 30-year-old human, while a four-year-old hound is comparable to a 52-year-old person. Researcher Trey Ideker said by the time a dog reaches seven years old, its ageing slows. He said: "This makes sense. When you think about it, a nine-month-old dog can have puppies, so we already knew that the 1:7 ratio wasn't an accurate measure of age." The researchers said their new formula doesn't fully address the fact that different breeds of dog age at different speeds.