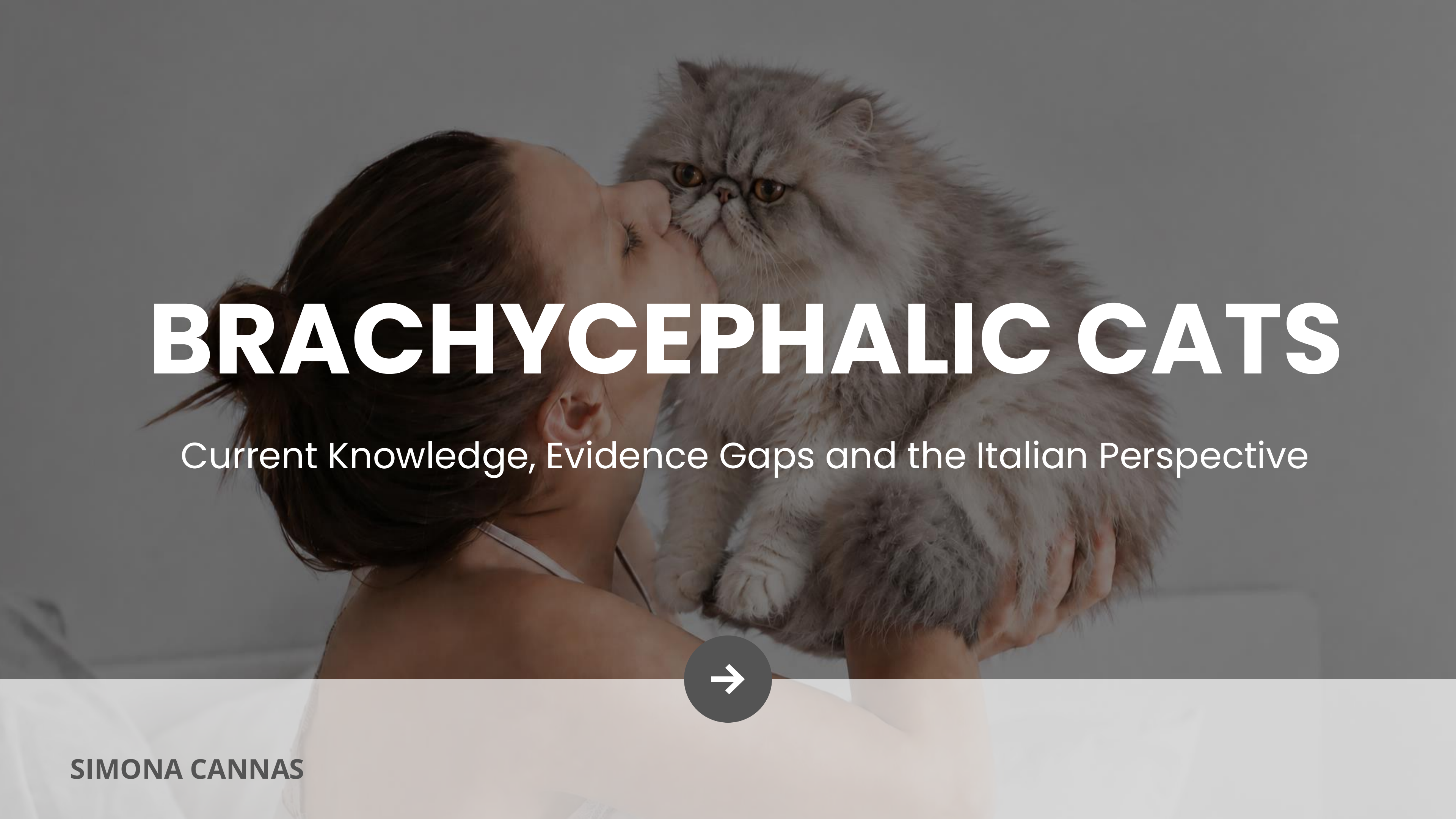


A woman with dark hair tied back is shown in profile, gently kissing a large, fluffy grey Persian cat. The cat has a flat face and orange eyes. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

BRACHYCEPHALIC CATS

Current Knowledge, Evidence Gaps and the Italian Perspective



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UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO
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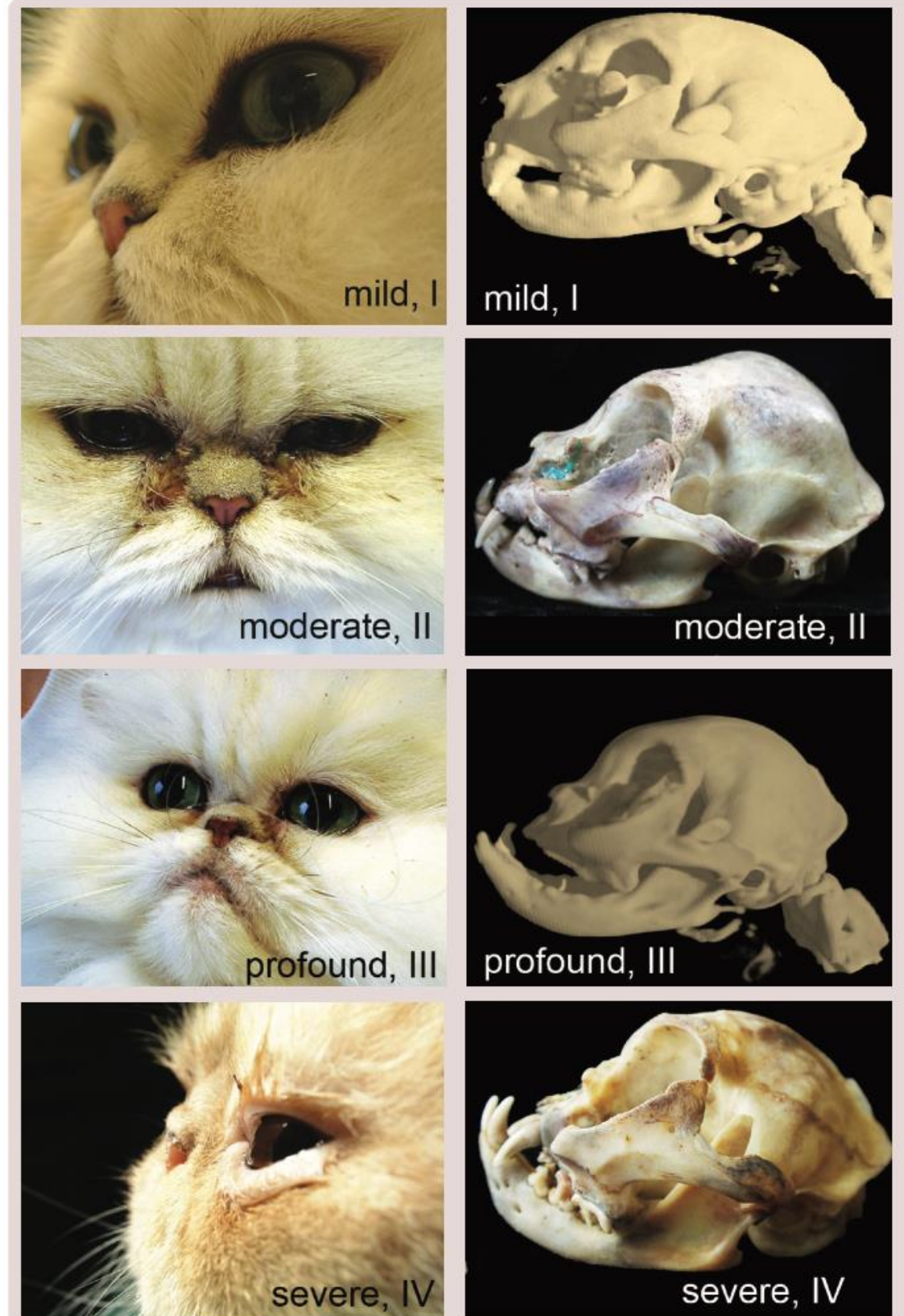
BRACHYCEPHALIC CATS

Rank among the top ten most-registered breeds (CAT FANCIERS' ASSOCIATION)

Excessive brachycephaly, as seen in "Peke-faced" Persians, results in significant anatomical change:

- shortened nose
- dorso-rotation of the jaws
- horizontal positioning of the upper canines, often leading to kinking of the nasolacrimal ducts

These traits could predispose brachycephalic cats to clinical disorders



BRACHYCEPHALIC CATS



Breathing

several lines of evidence; diagnostic standardisation, prevalence, and measurement of the respiratory impact on quality of life remain limited



Eyes

anatomical and clinical evidence converge regarding ocular health; risk estimates in the general population remain less precise than those obtained from specialist case series



Dentition and oral function

frequent problems, but their welfare impact is poorly quantified



Skull and nervous system and sleep

important evidence that should not be generalised

BRACHYCEPHALIC OBSTRUCTIVE AIRWAY SYNDROME (BOAS) IN BRACHYCEPHALIC CATS



definition

no consensus in the literature regarding the definition of obstructive respiratory syndrome in cats



evidence

the morphological skull abnormalities associated with feline brachycephaly do not result in the same anatomical alterations that represent the basis for the surgical corrections in dog



clinical signs

-inspiratory dyspnea: in cat is primarily nasal in origin, in dog is is predominantly pharyngeal and/or laryngeal

-respiratory sounds (primarily nasal): wheezing and rattling



pathognomonic

stenosis of the nasal vestibule

PREVALENCE OF BRACHYCEPHALIC OBSTRUCTIVE AIRWAYSYNDROME (BOAS) IN BRACHYCEPHALIC CATS

Stenosis of the nasal vestibule

- 01. this is the only anatomical abnormality in cats that is amenable to surgical correction and for which objective data exist in the literature
- 02. due to the lack of precise definitions there are no epidemiological studies in the literature reporting the prevalence of these abnormalities across different brachycephalic breeds

Published surgical cases in relation to annual pedigree registrations

- 01. analyzing published case series of brachycephalic cats that underwent surgery to correct vestibular stenosis
- 02. taking into account the geographic origins of these cases
- 03. breed-specific descriptive ratio based on the total number of individuals registered with various breed associations in 2025

Published surgical cases in relation to annual pedigree registrations

Breed	Geographic area	Pedigree (2025)	Total subjects	Published cases / annual registrations (%)
PERSIAN	USA	2000 (estimated)	23	1,15%
EXOTIC	USA	356 (real)	3	0,84%
SCOTTISH	USA	1200 (estimated)	8	0,70%
PERSIAN	EU	1225	15	1,22%
EXOTIC	EU	975	10	1,02%
SCOTTISH	EU	Not recognized	5	Not recognized

Descriptive ratios only. Published cases and annual registrations refer to different populations and observation periods and cannot be interpreted as prevalence estimates

ITALIAN STUDY ON BRACHYCEPHALIC CATS

Data availability: The findings from Italian study on brachycephalic cats

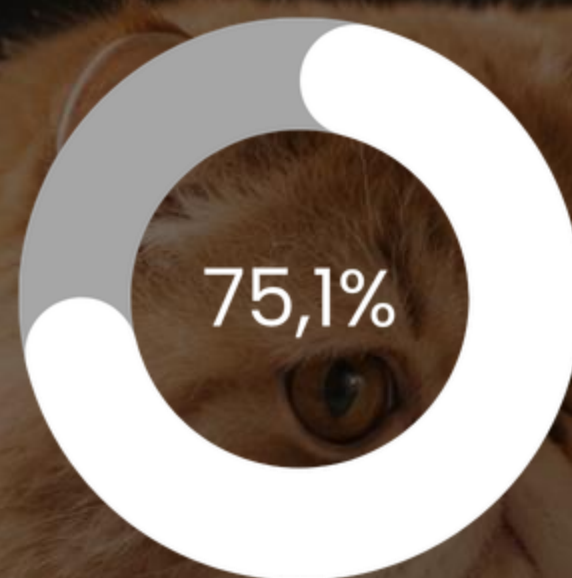
528 owners
278 brachycephalic cats
250 non-brachycephalic cats
CORS: owner-cat relationship
Fe-BARQ: reported behaviour

Behaviour and relationship

Brachycephalic group: higher separation-related behaviour scores and stronger perceived bonding.
Non-brachycephalic group: higher playfulness and affection-/attention-seeking scores

Welfare implication

better information before acquisition and individual welfare assessment



Unaware of potential respiratory problems before acquisition

209/278 brachycephalic-cat owners



Rated their cat's health as excellent

140/278 brachycephalic-cat owners

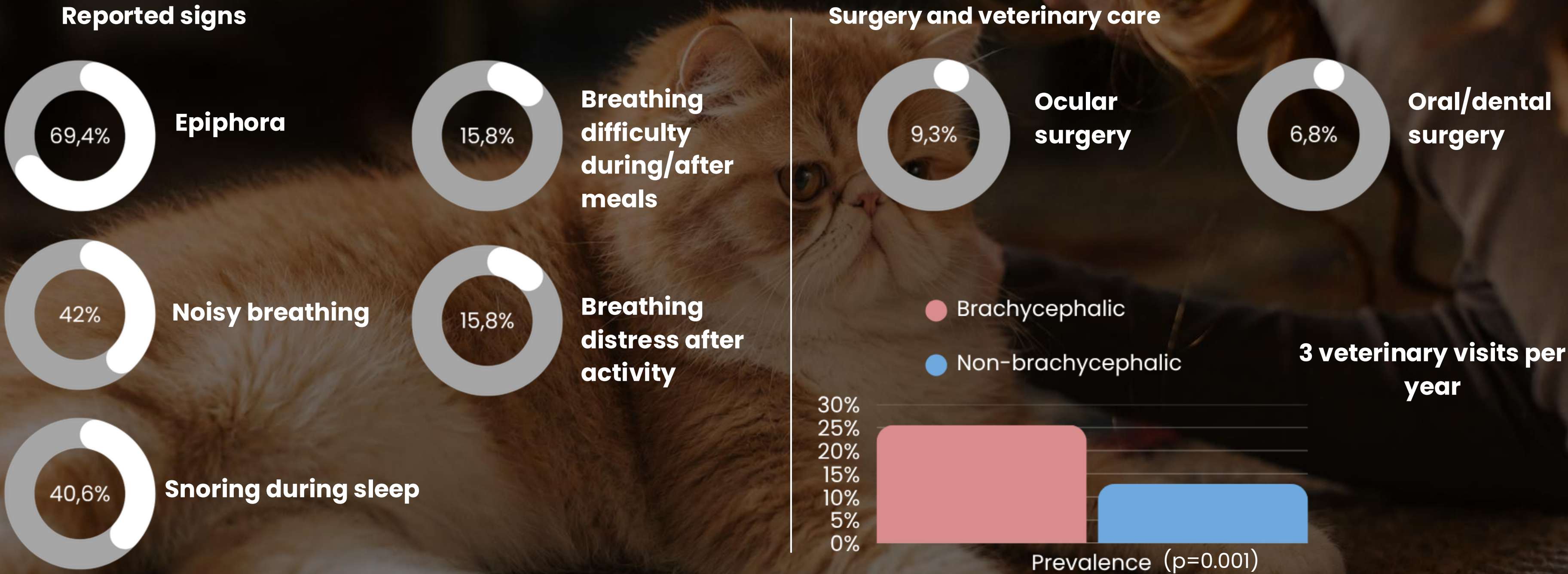
Owner-reported associations. The study does not estimate clinical BOAS prevalence

Berteselli et al., 2023;13:206. doi:10.3390/ani13020206

ITALIAN STUDY ON BRACHYCEPHALIC CATS

reported signs and veterinary care

Health data: 278 brachycephalic-cat owners

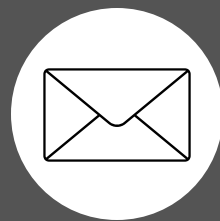


Owner-reported signs and care needs support individual clinical assessment

Berteselli et al., 2023;13:206. doi:10.3390/ani13020206



THANK YOU!



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