

Arthritis In Senior Pets

Arthritis is a condition where there is an inflammation of the joints, also known as degenerative joint disease. It is a common condition in senior pets but the degree of arthritis varies from pet to pet and with their age.



Some main causes of arthritis include inherited conditions such as hip or elbow dysplasia, cruciate ligament rupture, joint infection, trauma or injuries, and other various conditions as your pet age.

Non Steroidal Anti Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDS such as Metacam) and supplements that support joint health and diminish inflammation are the most common treatments for arthritis. Some pets can be more sensitive to the side effects of NSAIDS, therefore it is very important to have blood tests done before and during the use of an NSAID. Side effects are uncommon but are related to GI upset. In cats kidney function needs to be monitored closely.

Supplements such as glucosamine, chondroitin, MSM, omega 3 fatty acids and anti-inflammatory agents in green lipped mussels are known to help preserve the function of the joint cartilage. There are also anti-inflammatory agents called PGAGs that can be given by injection on a regular basis to prevent further joint degeneration.

Maintenance diets that contain these supplements can relieve the symptoms of arthritis such as Royal Canin MediCal Mobility Support and Prescription Hills J/D are a good source of Omega 3 fatty acids, glucosamine or green lipped mussel. It is clinically proven that these two diets help reduce pain and inflammation with supplements.



It is highly recommended to maintain your pet's weight as weight gain can put excess strain on the joints. Also regular mild daily exercise can keep the joints flexible, maintain muscle strength and increase mobility.

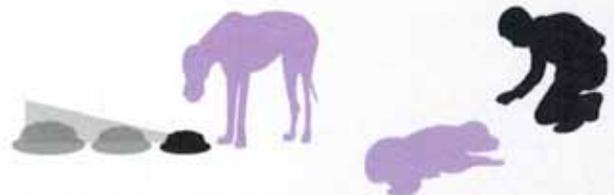
Ask your veterinarian for more information to see if these joint diets or NSAIDS such as metacam would be helpful for your pets' arthritis.

IS YOUR DOG THE 1 IN 5 SUFFERING FROM ARTHRITIS?

Early intervention and treatment will give your dog the best chance of living a pain-free life.



Arthritic dogs may be reluctant to play or walk



Arthritic dogs may have a reduced appetite and/or interaction with people



Arthritic dogs may have trouble climbing stairs or getting up after resting



Arthritic dogs may show aggression or other changes in behaviour



Arthritic dogs may limp or show stiffness



Arthritic dogs may have difficulty jumping onto the couch or into the car

Do you recognize these cats?

This **SIMPLE 5-PICTURE SYSTEM** can help you identify facial expressions, postural features and behaviour that help indicate if a cat is in need of additional pain management after surgery.

A picture of good pain control



THE CROISSANT

This cat shows well controlled pain. The ears are pricked (upright) and forward, the eyes are not slanted. A horizontal line could be drawn through the centre of each eye. The back is minimally hunched and the cat appears bright and alert. This cat also displays a relaxed, tucked in leg posture, resembling a croissant.

Faces of Acute Pain[®]



THE HUMPY

A cat with a hunched back, legs straightened often sitting quietly at the back of the cage may be in pain. This cat also has droopy ears and slanted half closed eyes. This posture is often seen after abdominal surgery.



THE SQUINTY

Cats with their heads down, ears "droopy" and eyes half closed and in a slanted position may be in pain. Note how a line drawn through the centre of the eyes makes a V shape.



THE FLAT-OUT

Cats which are recumbent, tense or rigid may be in severe pain. This cat also has the facial expressions of pain: droopy ears and slanted half closed eyes.



THE UNTOUCHABLE

Previously friendly and easy to handle cats that hiss, snarl or flinch or try to claw or bite in reaction to gentle pressure to a wound, or those that generally resent handling are probably in pain. A cat's reaction can be expected to be proportional to the amount of pain being experienced.

Metacam offers a comprehensive pain package for cats.