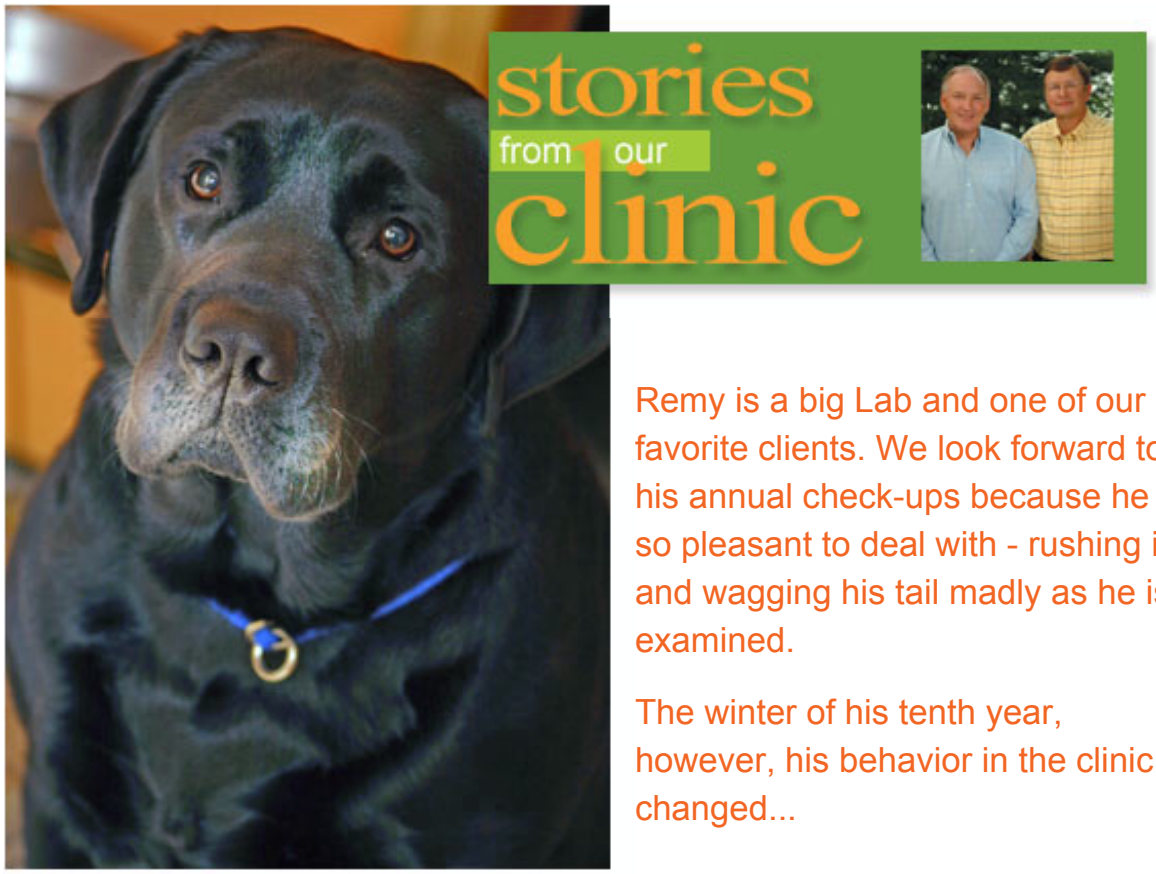
Stories From Our Clinic: Arthritis in an Old Lab

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff



Remy is a big Lab and one of our favorite clients. We look forward to his annual check-ups because he is so pleasant to deal with - rushing in and wagging his tail madly as he is examined.

The winter of his tenth year, however, his behavior in the clinic changed...

He seemed extremely uncomfortable when we manipulated his back legs, even turning and curling his lip at his favorite veterinarian. We questioned the owners and found out that as the days got shorter and the temperature dropped, Remy seemed to be slowing down just a little bit and he had a little trouble getting up after a long snooze. He also seemed sore after playing his favorite game of fetch. They thought it was just because he was getting older, but the fact that he raised his lip at someone gave them pause.

We took some x-rays and found that he had a moderate case of hip dysplasia. We explained to his owners that the signs of hip dysplasia - and many forms of arthritis - may get worse in the winter when dogs have less regular exercise, but there were many things they could do to make Remy more comfortable. First, we recommended the prescription NSAID Rimadyl to help reduce the pain and inflammation Remy was suffering due to the arthritis. To alleviate pressure points when Remy slept, we suggested he get a new, supportive bed, like our Quilted Super Deluxe to keep his old bones off the hard floor. We also suggested they consider adding a heated pad because heat can help relieve soreness in joints.

We knew Remy needed exercise, since it would help keep his weight down as well as keep the muscles around his joints strong. We suggested a slow, steady exercise regimen on a leash (a6 ft lead to keep him from bounding around). During snowy or icy weather, we told Remy's owners that boots, like Muttluks would help keep him from slipping and hurting his already aching joints.

Our Recommendations:

Senior Signature Series Blend Food

Maximum Joint Support Kit

Quilted Super

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Luckily, with a combination of exercise and eating our Senior Signature Blend Dog Food Remy has always been fit.

Since Remy's human companions traveled a lot and liked to take Remy with them in their car, we suggested a ramp like the Deluxe Telescoping Ramp - to give him easy access to the back of their SUV. For comfort in the car, we recommended our Deluxe Pet Cargo Liner for less jolting and cushioned comfort for his old bones.

We also suggested our Maximum Joint Support Kit as a way to help keep his healthy joints functioning at their best.

We saw Remy three months later and he was like a new dog - actually, he was exactly like his old self - tail wagging like mad, tongue lolling out and, once again, happy to let us examine him. We are glad he is back.

Deluxe Bed

Dura-Ruff® Lightweight Pet Stairs

Deluxe Quilted Cargo Liner

Dura-Ruff® Nylon Collars and Leads

Muttluks

Deluxe Telescoping Ramp

Weight Management for S

It is estimated that up to half of all pets in the Ur States suffer from obesity. Extra weight places st all the organs and increases the risk of heart and disease, diabetes, arthritis, and respiratory diseas decreases immune function. This is particularly troublesome for senior pets as extra pounds can c complicate the pain of arthritis.

Calorie intake & expenditure:

While there are many reasons why dogs may bec overweight, the underlying factor is excess calor Overfeeding (surplus calories) and low activity levels (less calorie use) are two areas where pet owners have a direct influence.

Regulate calorie intake:

A healthy weight-reduction program does not have to be complicated or difficult. Monitor and control excess calories through smart choices. Take a comprehensive approach and incorporate healthy choices within your daily routine.

- Scheduled feedings - If your overweight pet is used to "free-choice" feeding, then provide set, portioned meals. Rather than having a food bowl available at all times, use the LeBistro Electronic Feeder. This programmable feeder automatically dispenses dry food in controlled portions up to three times a day.
- Switch to a special weight-reduction diet - Our improved Adult Lite Food is a well-balanced dog food that contains more easily-digestible, nutrient-rich, meat protein.
- Choose the treat - Offer non-food rewards for good behavior. New toys or lavishing attention through grooming or interactive games are great,

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non-food alternatives. If edible treats are unavoidable, offer low-fat treats such as our Healthy Chicken Fillets in small portions. These snacks are much better than table scraps.

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