Prescription Non-steroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs) for dogs

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IF YOUR DOG is in pain from arthritis or other types of inflammation, your veterinarian may want you to give a prescription anti-inflammatory drug. Two different types of anti-inflammatory prescription drugs include corticosteroids, such as prednisone, and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).

NSAIDs offer pain relief and improved quality of life. These drugs decrease inflammation and also reduce swelling, stiffness, and joint pain. Typically they work without the side effects associated with corticosteroids.

These drugs work by blocking production of inflammatory body chemicals, called prostaglandins. Prostaglandins increase pain perception and swelling. One enzyme in the body, called COX-2, plays a key role in making prostaglandins that cause the inflammatory response. NSAIDs inhibit this enzyme and reduce the amount of prostaglandins that are released, helping curb pain.

Here is a very simple illustration of this process:

Oral NSAIDs your veterinarian may prescribe include: Rimadyl® (carprofen), Novox® (generic carprofen), Deramaxx® (deracoxib), or Etodolac (Generic).

The NSAID your veterinarian chooses for your dog depends on many things, including: age, kidney or liver function, severity of pain, pain relief response, or history of stomach ulcers. Remember that an NSAID should never be given with other NSAIDs, including aspirin.

Using over-the-counter products containing glucosamine and chondroitin may also help improve the health of the joint and reduce pain.

Using NSAIDs is one step you and your veterinarian can take to manage your dog's arthritis pain. Less pain for your dog means he can feel more like himself again and that means more enjoyment for you and for your pet.

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