Dog Arthritis: Multi-Prong Approach to Dog Comfort

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

Your otherwise healthy dog has begun to slow down.

He limps after exercise.

He thinks twice about going up stairs.

He carefully gets up from naps.

Could he have arthritis?

Schedule an appointment with your veterinarian to determine whether your dog's behavioral changes are indeed due to arthritis.

Arthritis occurs when the natural cartilage that cushions joints between bones begins to deteriorate and wear away, causing bone surfaces to rub directly (and painfully) upon one another. As the disease progresses, bone becomes

Your veterinarian will likely:

- Prescribe nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) like **Rimadyl** to decrease inflammation and pain.
- Recommend weight control to minimize stress on arthritic joints and healthy joints. Maintaining a healthy weight may help slow the progression of arthritis.
- Recommend non-weight-bearing exercise (such as swimming) to maintain the muscle mass needed to help support arthritic joint(s). Exercise also strengthens muscles in healthy limbs that must now work harder.
- Suggest physical aids such as ramps; lifts; and stairs. These help your dog more easily access the locations

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As the disease progresses, bone becomes rougher, causing a painful cycle of cartilage loss and bone surface changes. Although arthritis has no cure, your veterinarian can recommend a management plan, see right, to help slow the progression of arthritis, support healthy joints, maintain mobility, and decrease pain.

he loves. Your dog may also benefit from an orthopedic bed, such as our **Quilted Super Deluxe Bed**, to cushion joints and make getting up easier.

- Suggest maintaining your dog's healthy joints with a non-prescription joint supplement containing ingredients such as glucosamine and chondroitin. Our **Joi Joint Care Premium Plus** is our most powerful joint care product, with MORE active ingredients than any of our other pet joint products.

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Arthritis may be a frustrating diagnosis, but it does not have to hinder your dog's quality of life. The right treatment plan, paired with the right comfort-enhancing, mobility-supporting products, can help your dog enjoy many happy years to come.

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