



ARTHRITIS IN DOGS

Arthritis, osteoarthritis or degenerative joint disease, is a common problem. It is the result of wear and tear of cartilage in the joints. Cartilage damage and loss is accelerated by poorly conformed joints or joint injury. So far the only cure for degenerative joints is joint replacement (e.g. hip replacement). Arthritis is always progressive and worsens over time.

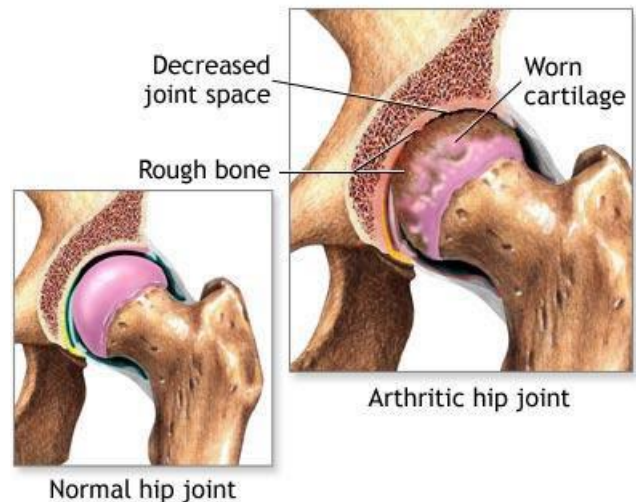
We have a range of medications available that are designed to preserve cartilage, decrease inflammation and provide pain relief. Improved joint function will increase mobility but cannot achieve a cure.

In the early stages of arthritis, medical management is often the best option for cats. If the pain is more severe or if joint conformation needs to be addressed, surgery becomes a better option.

There are several options for managing arthritis in cats which are often difficult to appreciate fully in one visit. The purpose of this sheet is to outline the various medications available for managing arthritis.

Weight management

If your dog is overweight this can worsen the arthritis and pain as more weight/force is taken on the joints. Maintaining a lean body weight is important as a drug free way to manage arthritis. If you'd like advice on your dog's body condition and weight loss – please discuss this with our vets or veterinary nurses.



Zydax Injections

Zydax (pentosan) is a unique drug that stimulates cartilage re-growth; a repair damaged joints and improves the quality of joint fluid. It also has anti-inflammatory properties. There are no side effects from long or short term therapy with Zydax and it can be used safely with other drugs. It is given as a weekly injection for four weeks and this course is repeated every 3, 6 or 12 months depending on the cat's needs. It can take three or four weeks before an improvement is noticed so be patient.

Exercise is important

A manageable exercise program is important for maintaining muscle strength and support for the joints. It is best to do small regular exercise sessions rather than only a large walk once a week that might make your dog sore. Swimming can be a good low impact option for exercise. If your dog is too painful to exercise well, see below for non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs.





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Hills Prescription diet j/d



This diet provides some important supplement for dogs with arthritis. It is an excellent 'drug free' option.

It contains a very high level of nutritional supplementation of omega-3 fatty acids (fish oils). These omega 3s are anti-inflammatory at high levels and is helpful for dogs with arthritis.

Prescription diet j/d contains the highest levels of total omega-3 fatty acids of any therapeutic food for the management of cats with osteoarthritis. It has been clinically proven in trials - two recent studies provide high quality data that show diet with high levels of total omega-3 fatty acids and eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) can improve the clinical signs of

osteoarthritis.

FEATURE

- Breakthrough EPA Technology
- Superior, evidence-based medicine
- Over 4 times more Omega-3 fatty Acids than nearest competitor
- Proven to reduce NSAID dosage up to 25%
- Choice of diet form (wet & dry)

BENEFIT

- Slows progression of arthritis by blocking the genes that produce Cartilage destroying enzymes
- No other arthritis diet is clinically proven
- Relieves inflammation & pain in and around the joint
- Complements conventional therapies for safer long term management
- Aids long-term compliance.

Non steroidal anti inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)

E.g. Onsior, Metacam.

These drugs act directly at the site of tissue damage to reduce inflammation. They are good for relieving pain. Human NSAIDs (panadol, nurofen) can be toxic to dogs, and lethal in cats so their use in pets is best avoided. Inflammation is destructive to cartilage so by controlling inflammation the joint degeneration slows. They also help to improve muscle strength, as dogs are less painful and more inclined to use their joints and maintain strength to support joints. In rare cases these drugs can cause stomach ulcers at high doses. NSAIDs cannot be used with cortisone (prednisolone/steroids). In dogs with existing kidney problems their use should be careful. They come as tablets or liquid and are given daily. Blood testing the kidney function is recommended every 6-12 months for dogs on this medication (this is also recommended for dogs over 8years of age regardless of medication)



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Joint Nutrition

E.g. Paw Osteocare and 4cyte

These provide the cartilage with lots of raw 'building blocks' (Glucosamine, chondroitin, essential amino acids, minerals and vitamins) for growing new cartilage. In arthritic joints there is a large turnover of these important raw materials. They are 'Drug free' and they come as chewable forms or granules to be added to their food.

Your Vet will discuss with you the best options for your pet.

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