

Does your dog have arthritis?

If your dog could talk, being his best friend would be a lot easier. But he can't tell you that his knees stiffen up after he plays too long - or that his hips hurt when he goes up or down stairs.

So he's counting on you to recognize signs of pain and decreased mobility and have your veterinarian diagnose the cause. Stiffness, limping or other subtle signs of pain may be early indications of osteoarthritis.

Know the facts.

- Osteoarthritis is one of the most common sources of chronic pain treated by veterinarians. It is painful, degenerative joint disease that often results from hip or elbow dysplasia.
- Osteoarthritis affects one in five adult dogs - more than eight million! And these are just the cases that have been diagnosed. The actual number of dogs suffering from this degenerative disease is unknown because many owners attribute the subtle changes in their pets to "old age" or slowing down when, in fact, it really can be osteoarthritis.
- While many cases occur in older animals, osteoarthritis can affect dogs of any age.
- Overweight dogs are likely candidates, but dogs of all sizes are affected.
- And while larger breeds are more at risk, all breeds and mixes can develop osteoarthritis.
- In short, any dog can develop this degenerative condition.

Know the signs.

- Reluctance to walk, climb stairs, jump or play.

- Limping.
- Lagging behind on walks.
- Difficulty rising from a resting position.
- Yelping in pain when touched.
- A personality change - resisting touch.

Cold or sudden weather changes or heavy exercise can make the pain worse and the signs more noticeable.

[Know the relief.](#)

If your dog has osteoarthritis, pain relief is possible with NSAID therapy. Without the pain, your pet can move freely and happily again.