



Woofles
Gourmet Petfood Kitchen

Arthritis & Joint Problems

Helping Dogs Cope With Arthritis

Osteoarthritis is the number one cause of chronic pain in dogs. It's important to recognize the signs - stiffness, slowing down on walks, reluctance to jump - and begin treatment early to slow the progression and help preserve your dog's quality of life.

Among the treatments that have been shown to help older dogs with canine arthritis are:

Glucosamine and Chondroitin

The first step in treating canine arthritis is the use of nutraceutical supplements called glycosaminoglycans (GAGs). These include glucosamine and Chondroitin sulphate. GAGs are important because they actually protect the joint rather than just reduce symptoms, by helping to rebuild cartilage and restore synovial (joint) fluid. **Biopet Joints** is a natural homeopathic remedy that will help with arthritis and joint mobility. **Dog-On** is another really good supplement that is high in Glucosamine and Chondroitin.

Diet

Eliminating grains from the diet may improve your dog's symptoms. In addition, plants from the nightshade family, including potatoes (not sweet potatoes), tomatoes, peppers (all kinds), and eggplant may aggravate arthritis.

It's not easy to avoid these foods unless you feed a homemade diet, where you control all the ingredients. Certain foods may help with arthritis: salmon, celery, ginger, alfalfa, tropical fruits such as mango and papaya, and cartilage are all good to add to the diet.

Weight and exercise

It's extremely important when dealing with a dog who has arthritis to keep him as lean as possible. Extra weight puts added stress on the joints, and makes it harder for your dog to get proper exercise. Moderate, low-impact exercise, such as walking or swimming, is important for dogs with arthritis, as regular exercise will help maintain flexibility and well-developed muscles help to stabilize the joints.

Natural anti-inflammatories

When your dog shows signs of arthritis, there are a number of natural anti-inflammatory supplements that you can try before resorting to medications. Foremost is fish oil, a source of the omega-3 fatty acids EPA and DHA, which reduce inflammation. Be sure to use fish body oil, not liver oil. You must supplement with vitamin E as well whenever you are giving oils, as otherwise the body will be depleted of this vitamin, good quality flax seed oil is also full of omega-3 and can be used.

Other natural therapies

Dogs with arthritis often respond to acupuncture and chiropractic treatments. Massage therapy can also be very beneficial, and is something you can learn to do yourself at home. Hydrotherapy using warm pools or underwater treadmills is becoming increasingly popular and can be very helpful, particularly for dogs recovering from surgery or injury.

DLPA Eventually, no matter what you do, your dog may require treatment for chronic pain. There is one more nutraceutical that can help with this: dl-phenylalanine (DLPA), an amino acid that is used to treat both depression and chronic pain.

This information can also be found on our website www.wooflespetfood.co.nz