

## TREATMENT

There are a few treatment options available on the market for arthritis. It is important that you see your Veterinarian for a clinical examination, for your pet so that the correct treatment can be chosen. Sometimes with our older pets your Veterinarian may require blood testing your animal before treatment can begin This is to ensure vital organ function is adequate before introducing drug therapy.

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs are normally the drugs of choice for this disease, they are:

- **Rimadyl**



- **Metacam**



- **Previcox**



These drugs are prescribed by your Vet. They are effective in treating the signs we see in our pets, and help to make both your pet & yourself feel better.

## TREATMENT cont...

Some Veterinarians will be able to offer you alternative treatments, such as, homeopathy remedies or Vitamin and Mineral supplements which can also help this disease. A combination of both prescription drugs & vitamin & mineral supplements can be a great treatment option.

Supplements can include the following:

- Pentosan Injections
- Dog-On biscuits
- Sashas Blend
- Bomazeal Senior
- My Beau
- Green lipped muscle extract, deer velvet, shark cartilage
- Glucosamine
- Chondroitin
- Sea flex

It is very important to remember that this disease can be managed very successfully in most of our pets, it can help them lead good quality lives.

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## ARTHRITIS MANAGEMENT FOR OUR SENIOR PETS



## WHAT IS ARTHRITIS?

Arthritis is a degenerative disease which affects the joints of an animal. It usually shows itself in senior animals.

The classic signs of arthritis are usually shown as stiffness and pain in our older pets. There are many diseases that can affect the joints in animals and occur as a result of:

- Ligament, tendon or muscle disease
- Fractures involving the joint
- Developmental disorders
- Congenital Disorders
- Dietary i.e. obesity and hormonal disease
- Metabolic Disorders
- Cancer

Arthritis is a joint disease, which develops over a period of time, as a result of wear & tear of the joints involved. This deterioration of the joint is by the cartilage—an elastic substance on the ends of the bones forming the joint. The cartilage acts as a self-repairing, shock absorbing layer—which begins to disappear from the joint during movement of the arthritic joint.

There are TWO types of arthritis found in our companion animals, they are:

- Osteo-Arthritis
- Rheumatoid Arthritis

These TWO different types of arthritis can cause pain and discomfort for your pet. If you notice your pet having trouble moving after sitting for a long period of time, stiffness when walking, reluctant to exercise, or swollen painful joints, then visit your Veterinarian for an examination. Treatment for your pet may be beneficial for you both.

On examination of your pet, your Vet will be able to identify which type of arthritis your animal is displaying. Usually a radiograph will help to determine which type it is. If you ever have concerns regarding any medical complaint, a thorough examination by your Vet will help to put your mind at rest.



This is a radiograph of a normal canine hip. Notice the ball/head of the femur has a round defined line



This is a radiograph of an arthritic hip. Notice the rough hip joint. It doesn't have a smooth rounded head.

## MANAGEMENT

Once the cause has been diagnosed, steps can be taken to help minimize the effect of this disease on your pet. The following are some helpful hints for managing arthritis

- Weight Management—Keep your pet at an ideal weight for his/her breed to help keep the extra stress off the joints
- Exercise—Regular exercise, appropriate for your pet's life stage can help in keeping those joints moving, smaller amounts of exercise more often can be better for some of our older pets. Some alternative exercises include swimming, walking on treadmills, & of course gentle walks.
- Warm & Comfortable sleeping areas—make sure your animal's bed is warm and comfortable especially in cold damp weather, the use of wheat packs can also be a great idea. Use large mattress like beds that provide a good amount of cushioning.
- Coats for dogs can be beneficial to help keep them warm through the winter months
- Massage &/or Physio can also help these older pets, it can help increase circulation & relieve tight muscles

