

ARTHRITIS MANAGEMENT

Arthritis is a painful condition caused by inflammation of the joints.

Arthritis is common in older animals as a result of cartilage degradation. Other causes of arthritis are injuries, conformational issues, auto-immune diseases and viral or bacterial infections.

Signs of arthritis include:

- limping, stiffness, change in gait
- reluctance to walk, jump, climb stairs or play
- difficulty rising after resting or finding a comfortable position
- licking/self trauma
- change in behaviour such as aggression, anxiety or clinginess
- reduced interaction with people
- reduced appetite
- change in toileting behaviour
- increase in vocalisation, yelping when touched

There are five significant components of treatment:

1. Weight control - the more overweight the animal, the more stress on the joints
2. Warm, soft bedding in a draft free area
3. Exercise - regular controlled exercise such as gentle walks or swimming
4. Physiotherapy - massage, heat packs or referral to animal physiotherapist
5. Medication
 - Chondroprotective agents - cartrophen injections, Antinol, glucosamine/chondroitin, specialised veterinary diets
 - Anti-inflammatory and pain relieving medications - non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs or neuropathic pain relief.

Make an appointment with one of our vets to discuss the best treatment protocol for your pet.