

Broken Bones in Dogs

The causes and treatments of a dog's broken bone.

Note: Broken bones are not always obvious, especially those involving the skull, face, ribs, pelvis, or paws.

SIGNS OF A DOG'S BROKEN BONE Pain, often (but not always) severe. Appearance of an "extra" joint in leg or unusual orientation of the leg. Refusal to bear weight on the affected leg. "Scissoring" or splaying of the dog's rear legs (sign of a pelvic fracture). Depression in the dog's skull. Inability to open or close mouth normally. Abnormal movement of part of the rib cage (i.e., part of the rib cage expands when the rest of the rib cage contracts). **CAUSES OF BROKEN BONES**

Trauma: Possibly hit by a car, kicked by a horse or cow, or bitten by another animal.

Disease: Cancer (osteosarcoma, primary hyperparathyroidism, parathyroid gland adenoma) or chronic renal disease (renal secondary hyperparathyroidism).

Nutritional deficiency: Improper diet, especially with respect to calcium and phosphorus.

What to do: Keep the dog calm and immobile to prevent further injury. If the dog is bleeding, apply pressure to wound, if possible (see Bleeding). Apply only enough pressure to control the bleeding, excessive pressure could worsen the injury. Cover the dog to keep him warm, then immediately take him to a veterinarian for further treatment.

- Instructions for transporting an injured dog -

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Have a health question about your dog? Ask our vet expert or ask other dog owners on our forums.