

## Dog's Limp Tail May Be Cold Water Tail

**Most dogs recover on their own, but pain medication can help.**

*By Jon Geller, DVM*

Q. My dog is hanging his tail instead of its normal state of being upright. Any idea what the problem is?

A. If your dog has been swimming or recently had a bath with cold water, he probably has "limber tail," also known as "cold water tail." It is a very painful condition that will cause dogs to hold their tails between their legs, and they usually react sharply if you try to touch the tail's base.

There is not much known about what actually causes this condition, but it is suspected that somehow the muscles at the base of the tail become paralyzed temporarily by the cold water. Fortunately, dogs will eventually get over this condition on their own, but in the meantime they should be given pain medications. Most veterinarians would prescribe an anti-inflammatory such as Rimadyl or other pain killer such as Tramadol.

If your dog seems painful around the base of his tail, you can give your dog aspirin at a dose of about 10 mg per pound twice a day. This should only be done for two days at the most, because aspirin will eventually cause stomach bleeding in dogs.