

John Grogan's Puppy Treated for Hip Dysplasia

Labrador Retriever Woodson portrayed a young Marley in "Marley & Me."

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"Marley & Me" author John Grogan's new Labrador Retriever Woodson – one of several puppies to portray a young Marley in the film adaptation – is being treated for severe hip dysplasia, Grogan writes in USA Today.

"We noticed that our pup seemed unable to do the things Lab puppies do so effortlessly – leap onto furniture or hop into the back seat of the car," Grogan says.

A veterinarian delivered the bad news. "Both rear hips were so malformed, the balls and sockets did not connect," Grogan says. "With each puppy step, bone was scraping bone."

Grogan called the now 1-year-old dog's breeder – "not to complain, just to inform," Grogan says – who offered to exchange the dog for a new puppy.

"My wife and I thought about it overnight before realizing there was really nothing to consider," Grogan says. "Woodson was part of our family now."

Woodson is now on a special diet and a "regimen of cartilage builders and medicines" and sees an orthopedic specialist at the University of Pennsylvania Veterinary School, Grogan says. "Surgery might be in his future, but for now he's comfortable and enjoys his life as a pampered house pooch. Woodson will never go hunting or hiking or even on long walks, and that's OK," Grogan says. "Some dogs are put on this Earth just to love you."