

Ten Signs of Joint or Arthritis Trouble

Learn to recognize the signs of arthritis to reduce your dog's suffering.

Kim Campbell Thornton

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Hip dysplasia, osteoarthritis, chondrodysplasia, and old fractures are among the conditions that can cause dogs to become stiff or lame, struggling to get to their feet in the morning or crying out in pain if they move the wrong way.

Recognizing joint problems early is the best way to keep your dog from suffering too much pain. The following signs can indicate trouble in any of your dog's joints, including the knees, hips, and lumbosacral (lower back) area. Take your dog to a veterinarian for an exam if you notice any of these signs:

Lameness. Swelling around a joint. Heat around a joint. Tenderness when you palpate a joint. Tenderness when flexing a joint. Redness of the skin around a sore joint (you may have to part the dog's hair to see this). Your dog holds its breath or stops panting when a painful joint is manipulated. Your dog reacts turns its head or snaps, for example when you touch a sore joint. Your dog puts less weight on a leg with a sore joint when it's standing still. Your dog holds up a leg with a sore joint.