

Dog Arthritis Treatments

New arthritis treatments help aching dogs get back on their feet.

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Owners may alleviate an arthritic dog's pain in some low-tech ways, too. Of utmost importance is weight reduction, which prevents and treats degenerative joint disease. Additionally, owners can: Engage their dogs in regular moderate exercise. Swimming is especially favorable, because it maintains muscle mass without stressing arthritic joints. Make a dog's sleeping arrangements warm and cozy. Apply heat in the form of a warm water bottle or towel over affected joint areas. Warm clothes also are recommended when it's cold outside. Massage the sore area with gentle, circular motions. Raise water and food bowls off the floor or purchase an elevated feeding system so the dog doesn't have to lower its head. Install ramps to help dogs climb stairs. For a dog having trouble, sling a towel underneath its belly.

Drug and holistic remedy manufacturers continue to study more products. "I think we will see further studies with agents that are considered safer," Dr Johnston said. "With the chondroitin sulfate and glucosamine products...more information should become available to us on those and how effective they are and under what conditions they should be used.

"I also believe more nonsteroidal products will become available to us as various drug companies discover the market in veterinary medicine."

The Rennicks attempted some over-the-counter approaches, that primarily center on buffered aspirin, before deciding on carprofen. While the drug makes their Collie sleepy for about an hour after he takes the drug, Cathey Rennick has seen no other side effects.

Although the drug is expensive on their budget, Cathey wanted to keep Murphy pain-free: "Fifty dollars a month isn't much to spend for a puppy who has been such a good watch dog and faithful friend."