

CANINE ARTHRITIS

TOP 10 EARLY WARNING SIGNS



How can you tell if your dog has arthritis or is developing the condition? Below are the top 10 signs to look out for. Early intervention and management can offer a better quality of life and save your dog from a great deal of pain and discomfort. If in any doubt, take your pooch to the vet for a thorough examination.

1 NO MORE BIG 'HELLO'!

Your dog isn't as exuberant as normal when he comes to greet you. He might still have a smile on his face, but he's not able to rise so quickly and run towards you.



2 ALTERED GAIT

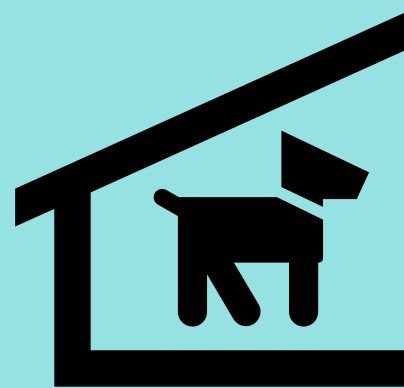
Your dog is putting more weight on the unaffected limbs and appearing rigid, as we would if we had a bad joint.

3 DIFFICULTY RISING

Your dog may struggle to get up after lying down and appear stiff and find it difficult to get up and down stairs or to jump in and out of the car.

4 LOSS OF APPETITE

Depending on the amount and type of pain your dog is in, he may go off food.



5 TIME ALONE

Your dog's behaviour may change in that he wants to go off by himself more, particularly to warm and soft places to sleep.

6 WEIGHT GAIN

Your dog may spend more time resting or sleeping and become reluctant to exercise which can lead to weight gain and exacerbate the disease.

7 STIFFNESS

Especially after exercise and prolonged periods of rest. Your dog may adopt a 'bunny hopping' movement.

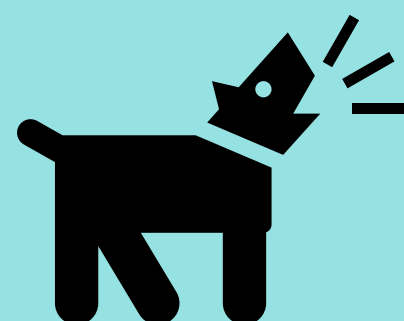


8 MUSCLE WASTAGE

There may be muscle atrophy (reduction in the size of the muscle) in the affected limb because the dog is using it less, or at least putting less weight on it and an associated weakness due to decreased use of the limb.

9 LICKING

Your dog will continually lick at the underlying painful joint, occasionally causing patches of saliva staining.



10 IRRITABILITY

Like us humans when we're in pain – your dog is irritable and may snap or bite when approached or handled, particularly if the petting or handling is increasing their pain.

Arthritis can be managed. If you notice any changes in your dog's behaviour like the ones above, book an appointment for an examination with your vet.