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The Ultimate Guide to

# Preventing and Treating Joint Pain in Dogs

Learn 8 effective methods to improve  
your pup's joint health



**Limping. Wincing. Trouble walking up and down stairs. As a loving dog owner, there's nothing worse than seeing your pup suffer from pain.**

Unfortunately, joint pain and related disorders like arthritis are all too common and can seriously hurt your dog's quality of life. According to the Arthritis Foundation, **around 20% of adult dogs suffer from some form of arthritis.**

Joint problems don't exclusively affect old and large dogs - it can happen to any dog of any size.

Aside from the heartwrenching sadness of watching your dog suffer, uncontrolled joint disorders can lead to costly medical bills when surgery is necessary.



As dog parents, it's our responsibility to do everything we can to help our fur babies. And though there's no 'cure' for joint disorders, there are effective ways to manage them.

**That's why we created this comprehensive guide - to spread awareness and to give you as many tools as possible to prevent, manage, and treat your dog's joint pain.**

*DISCLAIMER: The information included in this write-up is for educational and informational purposes only and does not replace the advice of your veterinarian. We highly encourage you to consult with your veterinarian before attempting any methods to manage your dog's joint pain.*

# What Causes Joint Pain?

## Joint problems in dogs look a lot like joint problems in humans.

Joints are where two bones connect - they contain cartilage which protects the bones and allows them to smoothly move around each other. When the cartilage wears away or becomes damaged, pain and inflammation can occur as the bones rub against each other without protection.

Joint problems are common in older dogs after a lifetime of wear and tear. However, there are many other possible causes that you should be aware of.

Other possible causes:

- 🐾 Injury from trauma like fractures or ruptured ligaments
- 🐾 Autoimmune disorders
- 🐾 Weight issues, obesity
- 🐾 Developmental complications like hip dysplasia



# What Are Joint Pain Disorders?

While arthritis is a common joint disorder, there are a number of different afflictions that can cause joint pain in dogs:

- 🐾 Hip and elbow dysplasia
- 🐾 Arthritis
- 🐾 Dislocations and fractures
- 🐾 Osteochondrosis
- 🐾 Joint trauma
- 🐾 Ligament tears



# Who Does it Affect?

As stated before, any dog can develop joint disorders, but it's far more commonly seen in large breeds and older dogs.

Rottweilers, German Shepherds, Labrador Retrievers, Doberman Pinschers, Saint Bernards, and Mastiffs are among the most commonly afflicted due to their size. Certain other breeds are prone to hereditary disorders like hip dysplasia and a luxating patella. These can include smaller dogs like Chihuahuas and Yorkshire Terriers.



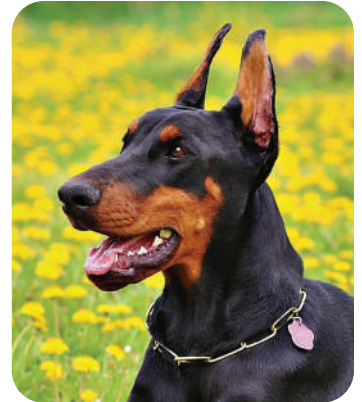
**Rottweiler**



**German  
Shepherd**



**Labrador  
Retriever**



**Doberman  
Pinscher**



**Mastiff**



**Saint  
Bernard**




**Chihuahua**





**Yorkshire  
Terrier**


# Signs of Joint Pain Disorders


It's difficult to spot early joint issues in dogs as they tend to hide their pain until it's too late. This is why it's important to be vigilant and keep an eye out for any signs of joint pain in your pup.


 Limping or trembling when walking


 Lethargy - increased laziness


 Standing only on one side (favoring just the front or back legs)

 Difficulty walking upstairs or jumping onto furniture they had no issues with before

 Rigidity, wincing, difficulty walking after sitting or lying down

 Licking the inflamed joint

 Irritability and other changes in temperament

 Disinterest in going for walks or playing games

Even if your dog is older in age and can't move around like they used to, it's good to be aware of issues that might be caused by joint problems instead of old age.

## Diagnosing Joint Disorders

If your dog shows any of the signs mentioned above, it's a good idea to take them to the veterinarian. You can expect your veterinarian to perform a physical exam to check the joints for pain.

If there's no straightforward diagnosis, your veterinarian might decide to run blood tests and x-rays to check for diseases or autoimmune disorders. Another method may also be to take a sample of the joint tissue to determine if the pain is caused by an infection.

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# 8 Effective Ways to Manage Joint Disorders



# 1. Weight Management

The absolute best way to slow down the progression and severity of joint disorders is to keep your dog at a healthy weight.

One famous study of Labrador Retrievers showed that dogs who maintained a lean weight lived around **two years longer on average** than overweight dogs in comparison. It's also well known that arthritis is strongly associated with obesity. Reducing your dog's weight will lighten up the pressure on their inflamed joints.

Consider placing your pup on a doggie diet. You can keep your dog at a healthy weight by reducing calorie intake during meals and avoid giving them extra treats.



# 2. Early awareness

It's important to play an active role in preventing joint issues in your dog. Since many problems are caused by trauma at a young age, early detection of issues can make all the difference.

Observe your dog and pay close attention: are they extra lazy lately? Are they not interested in walks? Did they stop jumping onto the bed recently?

If you notice anything odd with your pup, take them to the veterinarian immediately. Tests can detect hip dysplasia in puppies as young as 16 weeks of age.

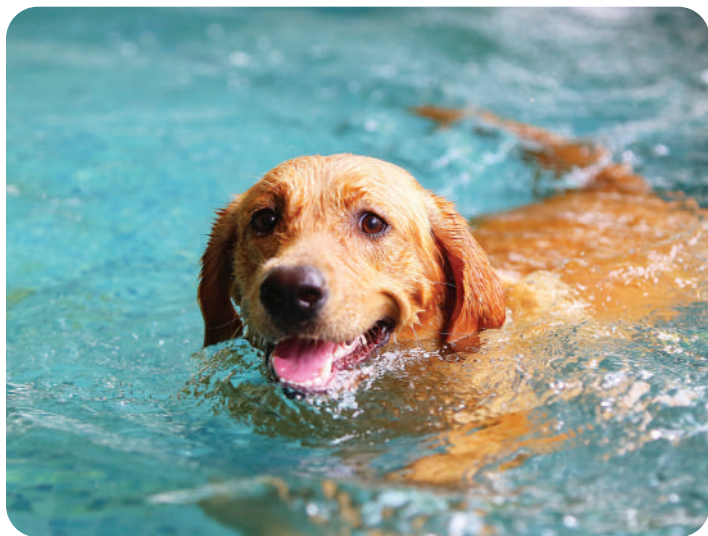


### 3. Consistent, Low-Impact Exercise's

It's common for dogs with joint pain to fall into a vicious cycle: it hurts them to move so they stop exercising. When they stop exercising, they gain weight. And when they gain weight... the cycle continues and the pain gets worse and worse. Regular exercise is one of the most beneficial methods to help your dog's poor joints.

Exercising warms up the joints and provides the joint with lubrication.

Lastly, try to prevent your dog from injuring themselves, especially at a young age. Avoid over-exercise, jumping too high, chasing animals too fast, and other risky situations.



**Swimming**



**Walking**



**Indoor games**



**Teaching new tricks**

## 4. Diet

The food you feed your dog is another important factor in their health.

### Omega-3 fatty acids



These healthy fats are known to help dogs with skin and fur issues, heart disease, and joint conditions. You can find healthy sources of Omega-3 in fish like salmon or sardines.

### Chondroitin



Chondroitin Sulfate is a complex carbohydrate that has been shown to bolster the integrity of cartilage by retaining water. Also found in shellfish.

### Glucosamine



A chemical found in artilage and other food sources like shellfish - specially green-lipped mussels.

### Collagen and Proline

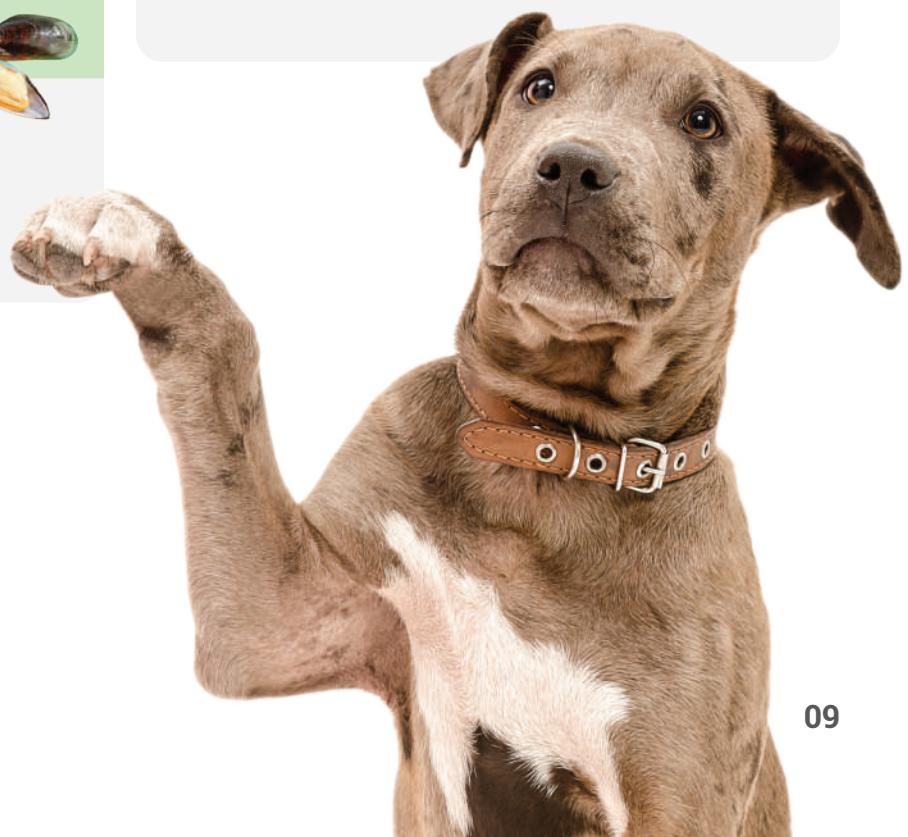


These are proteins and amino acids that are the building blocks of connective tissue like tendons and cartilage. They also help tissue repair and have been shown to reduce joint pain. Bone broth is an example of a healthy food that is high in both nutrients.

### Hyaluronic Acid



Also helps your tissues retain water and helps keep joints well-lubricated. Homemade bone broth is also a great source of Hyaluronic Acid.



## 5. Alternative Therapies

Massages are an easy way to help your dog relax and ease their joint pain. Treat your dog to a makeshift spa day by giving them a light massage and gently stretching their muscles.

If you prefer the holistic approach but need more help, it might be a good idea to check if your pet insurance covers alternative veterinary therapies.



## 6. Create a pet-friendly environment

Try to make your dog's environment as easy to navigate as possible. This includes:

- 🐾 Raising food and water bowls if they're hard to reach
- 🐾 Assisting your dog in getting up and down furniture or floors
- 🐾 Add carpeting to prevent slipping and to help them feel more stable
- 🐾 Keep cushions around the house in strategic locations
- 🐾 Use step stools or dog ramps in hard to reach spots

## 7. Visit The Vet Regularly

Take any signs of joint pain seriously. Regular visits to the veterinarian are a smart and easy way to keep your dog in the best of health.

## 8. Medications

Over-the-counter medications are helpful if your dog is suffering and you're not able to manage their pain through other methods. Pain relievers can temporarily reduce inflammation and provide your poor dog with the relief they need. Your veterinarian can also prescribe stronger medications like Prednisone or other glucocorticoids to manage pain.



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If you tried every method to help your dog without finding success, consult with your veterinarian and consider exploring surgical options. Most pet owners would prefer to use surgery as a last resort, but it might be the only option if all else fails.

Painful joint disorders can affect any dog of any age, and it's important to monitor your dog's health and behavior for any signs of pain. The earlier you prevent injuries, the better your dog's quality of life will be.

We hope this guide provided you with the knowledge and tools to help you potentially prevent and better manage your dog's joint pain. If you have any questions or concerns we're always here for you - email [hello@wuffes.com](mailto:hello@wuffes.com) and our team will be happy to help.

