



20 WAYS YOU CAN HELP YOUR DOG LIVE A HAPPY LIFE WHILE DEALING WITH ARTHRITIS.

Firstly, thank you for downloading my factsheet. I know first hand how important it is that we make sure that we do the best for our friends while they are dealing daily with the pain and discomfort that this debilitating disease can cause.



As a physiotherapist, I get to see regularly the importance of owners working with their beloved dogs at home to make sure that they are as comfortable as possible while living with a condition that can be very debilitating at times.

It is my passion to help dogs with this condition as its so rewarding to see them enjoying life and getting the most out of it for as long as possible. We have an elderly Labrador x in the family that has arthritis so I have personally tried out many of this points myself so know the benefits they can have.

Vicki



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Out of ideas for how to keep your best friend happy and content while they are living with Arthritis? Then here's some ideas and suggestions for you....

Do you know?

Osteoarthritis affects 1 in 5 dogs.

80% of dogs over 8 yrs old have arthritis.

Its very important that when we are living with dogs with arthritis that we do our best for them and look out for any slight changes in their behaviour or demeanor which may indicate that they are in pain or feeling uncomfortable.

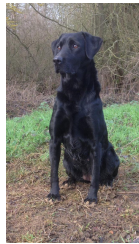




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1 - Keep your dog at the correct weight for their breed.

As nice as it is to treat our best friends, this can be detrimental to them as excess weight puts more stresses and strains on their already suffering joints.



2 - Avoid stairs where possible.

The motion of going up and down stairs can put excess stress on an already inflamed and painful joint.

3 - Avoid over exercising.

When the weekend comes we often like to take the opportunity to go for longer walks. This sudden increase can leave your dog feeling stiff and painful. Its important to make sure that you do the exercise that your dog is comfortable to do, not the exercise that you would like to do because the sun is shining and you fancy a walk along the river.

4 - If you have tiled or wooden flooring in your home, think about putting down carpet runners or matting to prevent them from slipping or sliding.

This doesn't need to be expensive, places such as amazon sell interlocking foam matting which is for children's playrooms but it will do the job.

If your dog slips or slides they will be risking further injury and also putting unnecessary strain on their affected joint.

5 - Raise their food bowl.

This prevents them from having to bend down too much. This is especially important if your dog has arthritis in their neck or spine as the bending action will be causing them discomfort which in turn they could associate with food and cause them to not want to eat in fear of being in pain.



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6 - Keep their minds active.

Often your dog will be doing less exercise when they are having an arthritic flare up or just not feeling it today. Why not put their food in a snuffle mat or give them a Kong with their food in so that they have the mental situation of working out how to get to their food.

7 - Avoid tough terrains.

Uneven surfaces and changing surfaces will be hard on their joints and muscles.

8 - Don't let them get too cold.

When its raining or cold think about putting a coat on them to help keep them warm. Also don't allow them to lay on cold hard surfaces for periods of time. Can their bed be moved to nearer a radiator in the winter months?

9 - Have regular physiotherapy or hydrotherapy session.

All physio and hydro therapists work under veterinary referral so this is a great way of monitoring your dogs condition as they can liaise directly with the treating vet.

10 - Work closely with your vet to create a unique management programme.

It is very important to work closely with your vet so that they can monitor your dogs progress and adjust their pain relief medication when needed and advice you on any further advances in the management of the condition.

11 - Early identification of any changes like reduced mobility and change in behaviour, body shape and posture.

Its very important that as the owner you note and report any changes as soon as they happen to both your vets and therapist so that any intervention can be started and changes made to the rehab programme.

12 - Anti- inflammatory medications.

There are many different medications available so talk to your vet to see which one is best for your dog.



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13 - Ramps to get in and out of the car.

Not all dogs will be happy to use a ramp so its important that you get them used to it slowly and in a controlled manner with two people present to help guide them up and down and prevent them from trying to step off the sides causing themselves damage or injury.

14 - Slopes rather than steps to get into the garden.

Is it possible to create a slope that goes over half the width of the steps that the dog can use so as not to put strain on their joints.



Jet learning to use a ramp to go in and out into the garden which is why he has a treat half way down.

15 - Invest in an orthopaedic dog bed that's larger than the dog with low sides.

This type of bed will provide the dog with support and extra comfort while they sleep. It will also allow them to lay with the legs stretched out rather than circled up as they may begin to find this position uncomfortable over time.

16 - If you dog has to use stairs, then make sure they are assisted to control the ascent and descent.

There are many different produces on the market which can be used such as a dog support sling or you can use a towel rolled up length ways and placed around the abdomen to help support the dogs weight while they are doing the stairs.

17 - Considering walking the dog on a harness rather than on his collar.

By walking your dog on a harness you are able to support there weight better should you need help if they are struggling with stairs or slopes on your walk. You will also be reducing the strain/pulling on their neck. There are many good harnesses on the market now that have been especially designed for arthritic dogs.



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18 - NO ball games!

As fun as dogs find this type of game, it can put unnecessary strain on the dogs already deteriorated joints.

19 - Put your dog on supplements.

There are many different supplements on the market. The best ones to use are the ones that are rich in Omega 3, DPA and Green Lipped Mussel. If you are unsure then its always worth checking with your vet or therapist to see if they think that it has the correct ingredients to help your dog.

20 - Trim the fur between the pads of all 4 feet and cut the nails.

By doing this you are able to reduce the risk of slipping and you will also be able to monitor any changes in the wear and tear of the nails and make sure there are no sores developing on the pads where the dog has changed the way it is placing it feet when walking.

I hope that you have found this helpful, if you have any questions then please tag me (@passionateaboutpetsanimalphysiotherapy) in a picture of your dog and I will help in anyway I can. Also let me know if you try any of these out and if you notice a change in your beloved friend.