

## What Is Hip Dysplasia?

Hip Dysplasia (HD) is a genetic condition that affects primarily large breed dogs as they grow and results in laxity (looseness) of the hip joint. Clinical signs can include, pain, limb dysfunction and progressive joint changes.

## How is Hip Dysplasia diagnosed?

Severe cases can show signs as early as 4 months to 4 years. Mild cases can progress more slowly and show symptoms later in life, often after 7 years of age. Symptoms can include:

- Decreased activity or inability
- Reluctance to play/jump/climb stairs
- Bunny hopping gait
- Hind limb muscle atrophy
- Narrow hind limb stance
- Pain or vocalization
- Lameness that is worse after rest and heavy exercise
- Behavior changes associated with pain.

The severity of HD and associated arthritis can be assessed on x-rays and palpation.

## Will my dog need surgery?

Just because a dog has been diagnosed with HD does not mean invasive surgery procedures will be necessary. Non-surgical management of HD is always the first step that you and your primary veterinarian can take. This can include, pain management, weight management, activity modification, joint/cartilage supplements, as well as seeking a referral for physical rehabilitation and regenerative/complimentary medicine.

## What types of pain medication help HD?

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) are typically the first line of pain-relieving medication used in small animals. These medication decrease inflammation and relieve pain associated with chronic arthritis. There are many different brands. Dogs, like people, may do better with one brand versus another. If your pet is intolerant of NSAIDs, Galliprant® is a new class of anti-inflammatory that is more targeted to the pain receptor and may have less risk of side effects compared to traditional NSAIDs.

# FAQ:

## Hip Dysplasia

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### **My dog is active, I don't want to restrict them.**

It is a misconception that dogs with arthritis should be restricted from exercising and should be allowed to become “couch potatoes.” Regular (daily) low impact exercise such as walking or swimming is strongly recommended. Inconsistent high activity (example: long hikes on weekends only) will increase pain and lameness. Dogs with moderate or severe hip arthritis should avoid activities that involve running and jumping.

### **What supplements are best for dogs with HD?**

Adequan - Disease-modifying osteoarthritic drug that has been shown to decrease joint inflammation and protect cartilage by blocking the enzymes that break down cartilage.

Dasuquin - Joint supplement that contains glucosamine, chondroitin, MSM, and avocado soybean unsaponifiable (ASU). These three compounds, when used together, have been shown to decrease the progression of arthritis.

Omega-3 Fatty Acids - Omega-3 Fatty acids are a natural method of decreasing inflammation and pain associated with arthritis. The doses required to achieve anti-inflammatory effects are greater than the recommended label dose on most over-the counter products.

### **Why does my dog's weight matter?**

Maintaining a lean body weight has been shown in both people and pets to be the most effective way of decreasing the pain and progression of arthritis. In dogs and cats, this often means that they are "on the skinny side of normal". In other words, you should be able to see a waistline from the top and from the side as well as being able to easily feel but not see the ribs.

### **What if conservative management does not work?**

If non-surgical management of HD is unsuccessful, your veterinarian or rehabilitation specialist will refer you to a board certified surgeon to discuss a more aggressive treatment which can include a femoral head osteotomy or total hip replacement.