

Arthritis



Its getting cold outside...

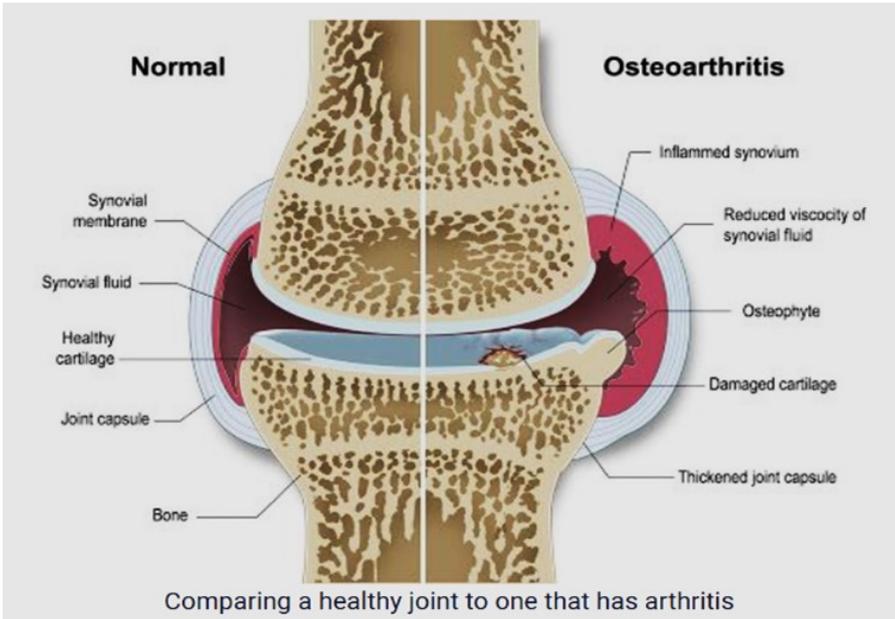
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Arthritis (also known as osteoarthritis) is an extremely common, painful disease that affects many of our pets, including dogs, cats and horses. Arthritis can affect any animal; young or old, big or small, purebred or mixed. Arthritis involves inflammation of the joint or bone and can affect one or more joints. Arthritis can be due to poor joint conformation from birth, from a traumatic injury or normal wear and tear on the joints as your pet ages.

Obesity can contribute to arthritis and make it worse.



Be sure to visit our website townsvillevetclinic.com.au for more information on caring for your pets, large and small, and the services provided by the Townsville Veterinary Clinic

Unfortunately, OA is a painful, progressive disease that cannot be cured. But the good news is that pain can be managed with help from your veterinarian, and your animal can be made more comfortable.

If any of the following statements relate to your pet, they may be suffering from arthritis. However, there are many treatment options available!

⇒ stiff or sore when rising	⇒ limping/lameness after a period of rest
⇒ reduced exercise tolerance	⇒ change in demeanour
⇒ reduced willingness to jump up/down	⇒ aggression
⇒ reduced willingness to play	⇒ vocalisation
⇒ restlessness	⇒ not sleeping through the night



Instagram





Arthritis

If these relate to your pet, your vet will perform an exam and feel all of your pet's limbs and watch your pet walk to confirm that your pet has arthritis and pinpoint which joints are involved. It may also be beneficial to take x-rays.

Depending on what your vet finds on exam, there are many treatment options. It is important to ensure that the progression is slowed and that your pet is as comfortable as possible, as this is a very painful disease. Treatment of OA is most effective when a multimodal approach is taken. There are two main components: lifestyle and medical management.

Lifestyle

Weight loss	If your pet is overweight, the joints have more loading and forces through the joints which causes more inflammation. Losing weight will reduce the inflammation.
Controlled exercise	Reduce exercise that is of high intensity i.e. jumping, deep sand, running for long periods, stairs Exercise for short periods i.e. 2 x 20 mins walks a day
Reduce slipping	Reduce walking on slippery surfaces i.e. lino, floor boards, tiles – add rugs to help

Medical

Nutraceuticals	These are food supplements usually containing glucosamine / chondroitin sulphate, which support cartilage structure. Omega 3 fatty acids have also been found to have anti-inflammatory properties.
Injectable chondroprotective	Such as Pentosan or Zydaxx There are different regimes of use depending on the severity of your pet's symptoms. These drugs have proved to be highly effective.
Prescription medications	These drugs reduce inflammation and suppress pain. There are many different drugs and combination of drugs that can be used effectively to keep your pet mobile and happy. Side effects can be minimized by monitoring your dog's blood work regularly.

Further monitoring

It is important to monitor the patient's progression once beginning treatment. It can be difficult for owners to assess the pet's level of comfort. However, regular revisits may be necessary, at 6 monthly intervals. If utilising prescription medications, it is also important to monitor regularly for changes in GIT or renal health.

