

When administering an NSAID, you should look out for these side effects:

Decrease or increase in appetite

Vomiting

Change in bowel movements

(such as diarrhoea, or black, tarry, or bloody stools)

Change in behaviour

(such as decreased or increased activity level, incoordination, seizure or aggression)

Yellowing of gums, skin, or whites of the eyes

(jaundice)

Change in drinking habits

(frequency, amount consumed)

Change in urination habits

(frequency, colour, or smell)

Change in skin

(redness, scabs, or scratching)

If you notice any of these possible side effects, stop the medication and contact your vet.



MANAGING ARTHRITIS

YOUR ANIMAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL

Managing arthritis in my dog and NSAIDs

Arthritis is a very common condition that affects more than 1 in 5 dogs to varying degrees. If left untreated, arthritis can cause your dog to suffer chronic pain, difficulty in movement and a general decline in their quality of life.



What is the cause?

Arthritis is a degenerative disease that can result from the cumulative effects of abnormal stresses placed on the joints, such as the mal-alignment of bones in the joint, hip and elbow dysplasia, or through trauma, ageing and gradual wear and tear on the joint surfaces. Obesity can also contribute to arthritis as it places greater weight on the joints.



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How does arthritis affect your dog?

Reluctance to go for walks, climb stairs, jump and play

Limping

Difficulty rising after sleeping or resting

A change in personality



Medical therapy

Today there are many different brands of medication and treatment options for arthritis. You can discuss these with your vet to decide which option will best suit your pet's needs.

Dietary supplements such as Glucosamine and Chondroitin are commonly used and can be of benefit in some cases. Hills produces a diet specifically designed for dogs with joint disease. It helps to down-regulate the gene expression for inflammation in the joint, thereby reducing pain and inflammation. Discuss this with your vet to see if it could benefit your dog.

What you need to know about NSAIDs: Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) have provided pain control for many dogs and offer significant benefits, particularly for

What can we do to manage your dog's arthritis?

There are many different things we can do to help your pet regain a good quality of life despite their arthritis. In addition to pain relief medication, there are 3 important areas to consider:

Weight control

If your dog is overweight, there is unnecessary pressure being placed on their sore joints, making the pain worse. It's imperative that your dog's weight is kept under control. We have diet programmes available to help and support you with this.

Exercise

Done in moderation, exercise can help keep the muscles that support your dog's joints toned. Gentle, regular exercise is the best sort, for example swimming in the warmer months can provide good, low impact, exercise.

Environment

Ensure your dog has a warm bed away from cold draughts and that is well padded. Try to reduce the number of stairs they need to use.

dogs suffering from arthritis. However, it's important that you are aware of possible side effects when administering drugs to your dog.

NSAIDs are well proven to help reduce pain and improve your dog's quality of life long term by allowing them to move around pain free. Aside from the pain relief benefits of NSAIDs, there are also long term benefits for your pet's joints as these medications can also help to reduce inflammation and therefore the degradation of the important cartilage surfaces in the joints.

The best way to avoid the possibility of your dog suffering serious side effects from NSAIDs is for you to be fully informed about the drug and its potential side effects. All dogs should undergo a thorough history and physical examination before initiation of NSAID therapy. Appropriate laboratory tests to establish baseline blood values prior to, and periodically (6 monthly) during the use of any NSAID, are strongly recommended.