

ASK OUR VETERINARIANS



What is hip dysplasia?

Well, hip dysplasia is a condition most commonly seen in large breed dogs. The disease develops while dogs are growing, resulting in abnormal development of the ball and socket hip joint. Their hip joints typically are extra loose and have an improper fit. Many young dogs with hip dysplasia may not show clinical signs, but as they get older these joints develop arthritis at an accelerated rate. Discomfort and pain in the hip joints is seen as these dogs may favor a back leg, have trouble rising, or even bunny hop on the back legs when they run. Diagnosis of hip dysplasia is usually made through examination by a veterinarian and x-rays of the dog's hips. Depending on the severity of the hip disease, treatment can include weight management, joint supplements, medications for pain and inflammation, or even surgeries to replace or remove part of the hip joint. As this disease is highly heritable from a dog's parents, many large breed dog breeders will have their dogs' hips radiographed and certified by organizations such as OFA or PennHip, helping to reduce the risks of hip dysplasia in the next generation of dogs. And although this disease can greatly limit a dog's mobility, with veterinary and at home care efforts we can work to provide most of these dogs with good quality of life.

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