

ASK OUR VETERINARIANS

Dear Dr. Schmidt,

It's quite easy to tell whether or not my dog is in pain. However, it seems more difficult to detect pain in my cats. What signs should I look for?

Jennifer

Jennifer, that's a very good question. Since cats lie around and sleep most of the day, it can be very difficult to tell if they're in pain. Just like people having pain, they won't stop their activities altogether, they'll just adjust the way they move and how often. As your cat ages, watch for any change in the way it walks, and especially how it moves going up and down stairs. Maybe she doesn't jump up to her favorite places like she used to? Also, don't forget about oral pain. If they have bad teeth or diseased gums, look for a decrease in appetite or bowel movements. If you suspect your cat is in pain--most older cats suffer arthritic pain just like humans and dogs--make an appointment with your vet to see where it may be coming from and what can be done to ease their discomfort. We can offer you various medications, laser therapy, and also ideas on how to make your home more "old cat" friendly. And lastly, don't forget to take home pain medication after any surgical procedure. It will make their recovery smoother, faster and so much more comfortable. I hope this information helps in keeping your cats pain free. They will love you even more for it!

Submitted by: Dr. Doug



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