

Treatments of Osteoarthritis

There is no “cure-all” for osteoarthritis. The best way to address this chronic condition is to use a multi-modal approach. By using different treatment options a customized plan can be used to alleviate the discomfort and improve the quality of life. Here are some the treatments that are frequently used by our hospital to combat this problem.

1. Glucosamine/Chondroitin Supplements

- Provides "building blocks" for hyaluronic acid and polysulfated glycosaminoglycans
- Protects cartilage, reduces inflammation naturally
- Very safe, minimal to no significant side effects
- We carry Cosequin, Synovi-MSM, and Synovi-G3 chews
- MSM is methylsulfonyl methane - building block for connective tissue, anti-inflammatory activity

2. Adequan (polysulfated glycosaminoglycans)

- Protects articular cartilage, increases production of hyaluronic acid
- Intramuscular injection or subcutaneous injection
- Dosing schedule is one injection every 4 days X 8 treatments, then every 3-4 weeks maintenance
- Very safe, minimal to no significant side effects
- FDA approved for dogs and horses
- Highly recommended

3. Legend (hyaluronic acid)

- Naturally reduces synovitis, inflammation of joint capsule
- FDA approved for horses, extra label use in dogs and cats
- Intravenous injection or subcutaneous injection
- Dosing schedule is one injection every 7 days X 4 treatments, then every 3-4 weeks

- Very safe, minimal to no significant side effects
- Highly recommended

4. **Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS)**

A. Prescription NSAIDS - Rimadyl, Metacam, Deramaxx

Best ones spare COX-1 enzyme and selectively inhibit COX-2 enzyme

Gastric/Stomach upset is the most common side effect - watch for anorexia, vomiting, and black/tarry stools

Very low incidence of liver or kidney toxicity - less than 1% of cases

Baseline bloodwork/urinalysis and periodic monitoring of bloodwork/urinalysis

B. Non-prescription NSAIDS- Aspirin *Not generally recommended*****

The ONLY over-the-counter NSAID that is potentially usable in dogs

***Frequently causes side effects in dogs, not as safe as Rimadyl, can cause liver, kidney and bleeding problems. Common side effect is stomach ulceration - watch for vomiting, anorexia, black/tarry stools*

5. **Chiropractic Care**

Chiropractic adjustments may be of benefit to dogs that are suffering from arthritis.

6. **Acupuncture Therapy**

Acupuncture has been shown to decrease the pain associated with arthritis and muscle changes caused by chronic pain.

7. **Weight Management**

Excess body weight is extremely detrimental to joint and overall body health. The less weight the animal is carrying the fewer medications and treatments that will be needed.

8. **Stem Cell Therapy (*The mature patient's own cells, NOT EMBRYONIC*)**

Fat cells are harvested from the patient, sent to a laboratory to aseptically purify and collect mesenchymal stem cells. These cells are then administered to the patient that they were harvested from. These cells have the unique ability to differentiate into cell types that are needed in the site they are injected to.