



Pets With Mobility Issues



Causes of Mobility Issues

- Hind limb weakness - arthritis, intervertebral disc disease (IVDD), degenerative myelopathy, injury
- Congenital and acquired joint disease- hip dysplasia, medial patellar luxation (MPL), elbow dysplasia, short spine, avascular necrosis of the hip (cats), anterior cruciate ligament tear (ACL), neoplasia
- Limb deformities and missing limbs- congenital (chihuahuas), injury,
- Amputation- neoplasia, limb deformity, chronic pain,
- Spinal cord disease, IVDD, neoplasia, bacterial infection, viral,
- Lyme, Ehrlichia, Anaplasma, and other tick borne diseases
- Systemic illness, metabolic disease
- Generalized poor mobility and weakness may be related to non-orthopedic illness

Diagnosis

History

- Consider breed predilection for joint and other orthopedic disease, injury, chronic vs acute, progression of an ongoing issue,

Physical Exam

- Localization of pain, swelling, fever, specific manipulation to diagnose ACL, hip dysplasia, luxations...

Diagnostics

- Bloodwork, genetic testing, x-rays, joint tap, ultrasound, CT, MRI
- Referral to Specialist



Treatment

- Dictated by the individual animal and condition
- Medication: antiinflammatory meds, pain meds,
- Supplements
- Laser therapy, Pulsed Electromagnetic Field Therapy (PEMF)
- Acupuncture
- Alternative Medicine, Homeopathic therapies
- Surgery for specific diagnoses- ACL, hip dysplasia, neoplasia,
- Physical Therapy/Rehab
- Treat secondary complications of paralysis- chronic UTI, ulcers and pressure sores, scraping skin on feet and legs



Caring For Pets with Mobility Issues

- *Safety* is a priority.
- Post op care recommendations from **surgeon**
- Meds and other treatments advice from veterinarians
- Paralyzed dogs need bladder and bowels expressed
- Click **HERE** for Instructional Videos
- **Support** from others with pets in similar situations is very helpful in learning to navigate caring for a disabled pet.
- Click **HERE** for Support Groups and other online resources
- Take individual temperament and disability into account. Some animals are unable to manage necessary treatments and care. Others adapt and move on as if nothing new has happened.

Supplies / Accommodations

- Supplies/Accommodations
- Mobility devices- wheels, braces, prosthetics, strollers, ramps, harnesses
- Hygiene supplies- diapers, pee pads,
- Drag bags
- Footing- yoga mats, runners,
- Click [HERE](#) for our supplies list



Quality of Life

How each individual pet adjusts and adapts to new or ongoing issues depends on the nature of the disability and the severity of the problem. Some don't miss a beat while others need more support in all ways. Perceptions of vets and pet parents depend on past experiences and overall approach to having pets. Years ago, a two-legged dog or cat was quickly discounted as unable to lead a good quality of life. Now we know differently. Three and two legged dogs and cats, amputees, paralyzed pets, and those that have injuries that require surgery all have the potential to lead good quality lives.

Most paralyzed animals need bladder and bowel expression numerous times a day, wheels to get around, and diapers to keep them clean. Many people assume that a paralyzed dog can't have a good life. Yet, with proper care, which many pet parents are more than willing to do both for their current pets as well as fostered or newly adopted pets, paralyzed pets can live a very fulfilled happy life.

It's important that pet parents sort through available resources (regular veterinarians, specialists, friends and family, online support groups, reliable online websites) as they are making decisions about long and short term treatment options for their pets. Some pets will make a full recovery from an injury, surgical procedure, after a period of rehab, while others will remain disabled, needing support on a daily basis. Find the support you need before making any kind of drastic decisions about your mobility challenged pets.

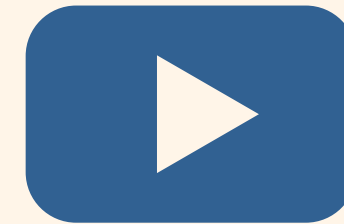


Support for Parents of Pets with Mobility Issues



Support

Support groups found [HERE](#)



Check our Disabled Pets [YouTube Channel](#) for instructional videos

www.disabledpets.org

