

## Comfort & Pain Relief

# Is Your Dog Limping? Lagging Behind or Uncomfortable?



Have you been noticing your dog slowing down on walks, or perhaps losing the pep in their step? It could be that your furry friend is showing signs of a common type of arthritis called osteoarthritis (OA). No matter how minor the signs may seem, they're too important to ignore.

Whether it's trouble walking or jumping, struggling with stairs, or maybe less tail-wag greetings at the door – these could all signal OA. OA can affect one or more of your dog's joints, and could lead to pain, stiffness, joint swelling, and lameness. Not only can the pain make dogs less active and able, but it can also make them feel less themselves. That's because the effects of OA can take a toll on how dogs function and as how they feel and behave.

No one knows your dog better than you, so we recommend filling out our short and simple OA checklist and share it with your veterinarian. For more information, go to [OAChecklist.com](https://www.oachecklist.com).

## Any dog can get OA, and it can be easily missed or blamed on something like old age

More dogs suffer from OA than you might think. In a recent study of 504 dogs whose owners completed a checklist during a visit with a veterinarian, nearly 40% of dogs were diagnosed with OA.<sup>1</sup> You may be thinking, "Not *my* dog." But, in fact, *any* dog can get OA, and it can be easily missed or blamed on something else, like old age. But OA doesn't just come with old age—*it affects dogs of all ages, sizes, and breeds.*<sup>2</sup> And while there is no cure, being able to recognize the signs and seeking proper treatment for your pup can help slow down OA progression, ease the pain, and improve their quality of life.

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While you might think to take treatment into your own hands, it's actually best left to the veterinarian. A pain reliever meant for you or even for another pet may be toxic for your dog with OA pain.<sup>3</sup> So, if your dog's sending you a signal, it's very important that you talk to your veterinarian right away to make an appointment and ask about an effective approach to pain management. Your veterinarian might recommend a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID), often prescribed for dogs with osteoarthritis. Recent studies show that NSAID treatment can improve function in dogs with OA, and may improve their mental and emotional well-being.<sup>4</sup> And that's the ultimate outcome you want for your dog.

Your veterinarian may also talk to you about the importance of other steps you can take to minimize your dog's pain, such as weight control and exercise. Left untreated, the effects of OA can get worse. But with the proper treatment, and as long as you stick with the prescribed course, your veterinarian can help your dog send the signals you want to see: A ball dropped at your feet, that excited greeting at the door, signs that your pet is more comfortable and acting like themselves again.

**Visit [OAChecklist.com](https://www.zoetispetcare.com/OAChecklist.com) to identify your dog's activities and behaviors that may be signs of osteoarthritis and OA-related pain.**

**Learn more at [zoetispetcare.com](https://www.zoetispetcare.com)**

1. Zoetis Data on File, Study Report ORCAD 1030.
2. Mele E. Epidemiology of osteoarthritis. *Veterinary Focus*.2007;17(3):4-10.
3. <https://www.fda.gov/AnimalVeterinary/ResourcesforYou/AnimalHealthLiteracy/ucm392732.htm>
4. Reid J, Wright A, Gober M, Nolan, A.M, et al. (2018). Measuring chronic pain in osteoarthritic dogs treated long-term with carprofen, through its impact on health-related quality of life (HRQL). *Vet Comp Orthop Traumatol*. 31(S 01): A1-A6.

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