

Hip Dysplasia

Hip dysplasia is a developmental orthopaedic disease that can affect any dog however, large breed, rapidly growing dogs, are more commonly affected.

Factors reducing the likelihood of hip dysplasia:

- early off lead exercise
- Calorie controlled diet
- Joint supplements

Factors predisposing to hip dysplasia:

- excessive food consumption
- rapid growth
- Early neutering
- Calcium supplementation

Common signs:

Affected dogs often have difficulty getting up, reluctance to walk, jump, run or use stairs. Hip pain and lying down frequently on walks are common. Sometimes a “bunny hopping” gait is seen.

Common findings:

Hip laxity is often appreciable under sedation. Radiographic hip views showing standard, ventro-dorsal, frog-legged and extended positions, often show remodelling of the head of the femur and thickening of the cup of the joint, with subluxation of the femoral head. In more progressed cases, secondary arthritic change is seen.

Management Options:

Conservative measures:

- *Analgesia as required (NSAIDS, followed by paracetamol, codeine, gabapentin, amantadine as necessary)*
- *Joint supplements (evidence of reduced inflammation and better pain management)*
- *Weight control - potentially the most important factor!*
- *Controlled, consistent exercise*
This should be the same length and type of exercise daily and can be used as a measure of progression.
- *Physiotherapy and hydrotherapy.*

Surgical Options:

These are usually reserved for patients who cannot cope with the above measures, cannot tolerate certain medications, or have severe unresponsive hip pain.

