

Improving your Dog's and Cat's Mobility

Guelph, ON

Osteoarthritis (OA), or Degenerative Joint Disease (DJD), is a disease characterized by the destruction of the protective lining that covers the bone in a movable joint. This destruction leads to inflammation and pain within the joint. This disease is a sad one, as it can subject your dog or cat to a lifetime of pain.

Often, veterinary professionals treat dogs and cats with OA or DJD using a multimodal approach. Let's explore together some of these modalities.

Weight management is an important factor in addressing and managing OA and DJD. Due to the increasing rise in obesity in our pet population, the incidence of OA and DJD is on the rise. It is important to maintain a healthy weight for your pet through appropriate diet containing omega-3 fatty acids and exercise.

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) have been an integral part for treating dogs and cats with OA and DJD for many years. NSAIDs are helpful in treating this condition, as they help decrease the pain but also relieve some of the inflammation in the joint. Your veterinarian can discuss the risks and benefits of NSAIDs with you and whether this is the best choice for your pet.

Gabapentin is a medication that has been widely used for neuropathic and maladaptive pain in humans for many years. Due to its safety and efficacy in humans, as well as some published evidence that this therapy is helpful in treating OA and DJD in dogs and cats, it has been used for the last few years in companion animals. It has had some success in helping treat OA and DJD in dogs and cats, however more clinical studies need to be produced at this time.

For more information:

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These are just a few examples of some of the most common modalities available to help treat OA and DJD in our beloved pets. Recently some studies have been done looking at the use of monoclonal antibodies to treat OA and DJD in dogs and cats. Monoclonal antibodies have been used for several conditions for many years in humans, notably rheumatoid arthritis, Crohn's disease, and some cancers to name a few. They have been shown to have very minimal side effects and can be used long term. The very first monoclonal antibody for dogs was released a few years ago. It is used to treat Canine Atopic Dermatitis; a common dermatological condition of dogs that causes pruritus. Since seeing such great results with the latter, monoclonal antibodies may be the way of future therapies for pets with OA or DJD!