

Lameness

What is lameness?

Lameness refers to the disability of one or more limbs. It is most often associated with pain or injury resulting in a pet holding the injured limb up or avoiding using it. The most common causes of acute lameness in dogs are injury to a joint, bone fracture or dislocation. Osteoarthritis and hip dysplasia also cause lameness in dogs. Lameness can affect dogs of any age from growing puppies to senior dogs.

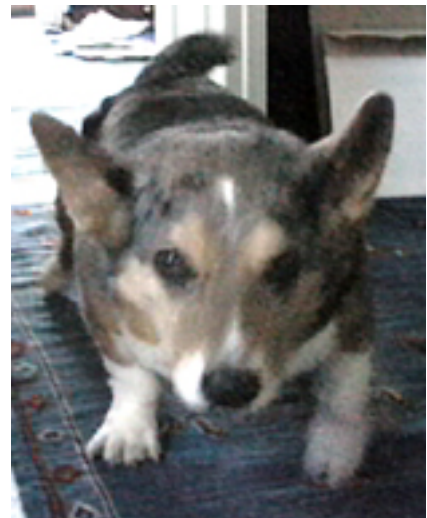
Puppies – lameness is often the result of growth defects or injury

Adult Dogs – Limb injuries sometimes without any history of accident cause lameness

Senior Dogs – Degenerative joint disease (DJD) or arthritis are the most cause of lameness

My dog suddenly developed lameness and there is no obvious cause on examinations or x-ray. What can be done?

Lameness of unknown origin is common in dogs of all types and sizes. If only they could talk! Depending on the severity and duration, additional tests such as blood and urine tests to look for an infectious cause or anti-inflammatory medications may be necessary. Your veterinarian will determine the best course of action based on your pet's condition and the results of diagnostic tests.



If my dog continues to be lame, will he be on medication forever?

Not necessarily. Most of the time, we are able to accurately diagnose the cause of lameness and provide your pet with specific treatment. Some forms of lameness such as osteoarthritis require lifelong treatment while others can be treated with surgery or weight reduction.