



Happy New Year to Everyone!

January is Mobility Wellness Month

What does this mean for my pet? Having healthy, functional bones, ligaments, tendons and muscles for my pet (and myself) means a better quality of life is possible. The ability to do normal activity pain free is golden. What can I do to help better my pet's mobility?

1. Evaluate what my pet can now do and what was he/she able to do previously. Do I feel that there is a loss of playfulness, desire to be with me and the rest of the family, a loss of being able to jump up on surfaces normally easy to get to and now he/she has to plan the motion to get there or even misses. Do I have to carry or lift my dog into the car? Behavioural changes including vocalisation, lack or over grooming, avoiding stairs, grouching, aggression and seeming to age too early are **not** normal and can be symptoms of pain or other mobility issues.
2. Is my pet overweight? This is a tough one as the general population is so used to seeing overweight cats, dogs and other pets that a normal weight pet often looks to most humans as too skinny. If your pet is overweight then he/she will have a shortened lifespan 1/3 to 2/3 of his/her potential, what a heart-break that will be! Your pet is more likely to develop earlier diseases such as diabetes mellitus (sugar diabetes), chronic bladder problem, arthritis, cancer and many other metabolic diseases that will affect a normal weight animal later or may never occur in a normal weight pet. This is a very **SERIOUS** issue!
3. Is my pet at an age that he/she should be on nutraceuticals to prevent or delay early onset of joint diseases?
4. Has my pet injured his/her legs, back or other areas and doesn't seem to be recovering within a few days?
5. Has my pet injured himself/herself or had a recent surgery and I am having trouble following the recommended rehabilitation schedule or he/she is not progressing as well as expected?
6. Does my pet have any of these other symptoms such as inappropriate urination, constipation, decreased appetite, limping and gait changes, weight loss, changes in posture, trying to escape or thrashing around?

If the answer is yes to any of these then a physical examination would be invaluable to be able to discuss what can be done to improve his/her quality of life and get back to a reasonable mobility level and degree of wellness.

What can I do to help my pet?

**1-Physical examination and discussion with the clinic** to figure out what problems my pet has and how they can be managed and improved would be the first step.

**2-Aids that can be used to improve my pet's well being**, one or more of the following could apply depending on my pet's diagnoses;

**-Chiropractic care:** Proper spinal column function and body posture allows the body to work more effectively and stay healthy. Its goal is to correct any subluxations or misalignments to allow the body to function to its more normal potential.

**-Nutriceuticals:** These are supplements that many pets may need to improve joint healing and slow the rate of degeneration in joints. There are many available and a discussion to properly choose what your pet needs and will enjoy taking will be invaluable to his/her health.

**-Proper Weight Management:** As stated above, one lives 50 to 67% longer and with more comfort and better quality of life with normal weight. Discuss with our team if your pet is in the proper weight range and let us help you improve his/her quality of life and health!

**-Laser Therapy:** This is a therapeutic laser that is used to increase healing, decrease inflammation, aid in pain management for bone and joint degenerations and thus increase mobility and muscle tone for a more active fuller life.

**-Rehabilitation Management:** This is a multifactorial approach to help heal injuries, chronic joint problems and improve post surgical healing. The goals are to help the tissues heal and continue to improve the use of muscles, joints, ligaments and bones, prevent pain cycles, develop a unique protocol for your pet, define a time line and expectation of improvement (as close to reality as possible) and help you use your equipment at home (walking, leash, restricted activity, appropriate play exercises) to help your pet's healing powers.

**-Medication Therapy:** many cases need oral or injectable therapies to help with the swelling in the bones and joints, increase the production of joint fluid and diminish your pet's pain. This permits you to help him/her achieve their goals sooner for all of the other previously mentioned managements, cares and therapies to get him/her to the best quality of life and health possible.

Please let our health care team know any and all of your concerns so we can help you help your pet!

All the Best from Everyone at  
Waterloo West Animal Hospital.  
Happy January 2010!