

Canine Hip Dysplasia

What is canine hip dysplasia?

Canine hip dysplasia is a developmental disorder of the hips. It can begin with joint laxity and eventually progress to arthritis over a period of several months to years. This condition is one of the most common skeletal diseases seen by veterinarians and is also most commonly seen in large breed dogs. Some significant characteristics of hip dysplasia can be but are not limited to body type, size, growth rate, and nutrition.

What are the clinical signs?

- Using front legs only when getting up
- Short stride in rear legs
- Rear limb lameness
- Soreness in hips
- Reluctance to exercise or climb stairs
- Difficulty or stiffness upon rising

These clinical signs can commonly begin between five and eight months of age. However, some dogs may not show noticeable signs until eight to ten years of age or older.

How is it diagnosed?

The diagnosis of canine hip dysplasia can be based on a number of factors.

- History of animal
- Physical examination
- Radiograph evaluation

Out of these three factors the most common and effective diagnostic used for canine hip dysplasia is radiograph evaluation.

How is it treated?

Medical and/or surgical treatment may be recommended for canine hip dysplasia, depending on the severity of the case. Medical treatment can consist of exercise restriction, body weight management, and symptomatic pain management with analgesics and anti-inflammatory drugs. There are also several surgical options that are now available for treating the various stages of hip dysplasia. They include the triple pelvic osteotomy, femoral head and neck excision, and total hip replacement.