

# PARKSIDE ANIMAL HOSPITAL e-NEWSLETTER

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WELCOME to the 12th edition of Parkside Animal Hospital's monthly newsletter:

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Look forward to health care tips and information, including services available for your pet; product rebates/promotions and much more, coordinating with the Parkside Animal Hospital website: [www.parksideanimalhospital.com](http://www.parksideanimalhospital.com)

Some of the many pets recently seen at Parkside!



Moose



Boddington



Kona



Mo



Bayley



Sally



Scout



Greta



Calvin



Voosa



Rosie



Biscuit



Blossom



Mia



Rudy



Layla



Gus



Cocoa



Anne



Peyton



Sammie



Luke



Maggie



Allie

Full Service Veterinary Care – Laser Surgery – Dental Care – Radiographs & Dental Xray – Grooming  
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## IS YOUR PET IN PAIN? ....recognition and management

Decades ago in veterinary medicine, pain was thought to be good for an injured or sick animal. This wasn't because veterinarians were cruel or wanted pets to suffer; they believed that pain helped keep animals sufficiently quiet in order to heal. It was thought that there really wasn't any way to know whether a pet was feeling pain or needed some relief; believing that animals did not experience pain the way humans did.

Today it's just the opposite: some veterinarians now believe they should treat for pain until there is proof that an animal isn't hurting. At Parkside Animal Hospital we are committed to relieving pain in your pet as part of providing good veterinary care.

### Why it's important to manage your pet's pain

Pain management has become an important issue in veterinary medicine. Many organizations including the Humane Society of the United States have studied pain and pain management in animals. Studies have shown that by helping your pet avoid pain you may be able to speed the recovery process, whether from surgery or injury. Best of all, because it reduces stress and increases a sense of well being, pain management may even help your pet live longer.

### Different kinds of pain

**Acute pain** comes on suddenly as a result of an injury, surgery, or an infection. It can be extremely uncomfortable for your pet and it may limit mobility. The good news is that it's usually temporary. It generally goes away when the condition that causes it is treated.

**Chronic pain** is long lasting and usually slow to develop. Some of the more common sources of chronic pain are age-related disorders such as arthritis, but it can also result from illnesses such as cancer or bone disease. This pain may be the hardest to deal with, because it can go on for years, or for an animal's entire lifetime. Also, because it develops slowly, some animals may gradually learn to tolerate the pain and live with it, although it doesn't make the pain hurt less. This can make chronic pain difficult to detect.

### How to know when your pet is hurting

When we have pain, we complain. We generally don't hear a peep out of our pets, though. The reason for this is because over past centuries and generations, animals who showed illness, injury or weakness were vulnerable. Dogs, as more social or "pack" animals, might be attacked or driven from their packs. Both cats and dogs were vulnerable to attack by predators. For these reasons.. imprinted over generations, your pet may only show subtle signs (if any), that it is in pain.

It is very important for you, your pet's owner and caretaker to take note of the little changes in behavior that will let you know. So how do you know when your pet's in pain?

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. Look for any of the following signs they may be your pet's way of saying "I hurt."

- **Being unusually quiet, listless, restless or unresponsive**
- **Panting (not exercise related)**
- **Constantly licking a particular part of the body**
- **Flattening ears against the head**
- **Seeking a lot more affection than usual**
- **Avoiding interaction with humans or other pets in the family; hiding**
- **Whining, whimpering, howling or constantly meowing**
- **Snapping, biting, crying out when being handled or when specific parts of the body are touched**
- **Difficulty eating or loss of interest in eating**
- **Inappropriate urination or elimination; particularly when a pet was reliably house-trained previously**
- **Loss of interest in play or taking walks**
- **Staying in crate, lying about more than usual; lying in one spot for prolonged periods**

Basically, any changes from your pet's normal behaviors may signal your pet is in pain or discomfort. If you suspect your pet might be hurting, ask your veterinarian to help you figure out the problem and to talk about what options are available. Be prepared to answer questions about your pet's behavior, activity level, and tolerance for being handled. Information on your pet's mobility is also crucial. Does Rover have a hard time getting up off his haunches or negotiating stairs (which was never a problem before)? Does Fluffy no longer jump up on to the furniture or have a hard time hopping back down?

Some pets never show signs of pain, but that doesn't mean they aren't feeling it. In these cases, if the injury, illness, or experience is one that sounds painful to you, go with the assumption that it may also hurt your pet and get to your veterinarian.

## **What you can do to help**

First and foremost, a **complete physical exam** by your veterinarian **is needed**, possibly including lab and blood tests or X rays. Veterinarians will usually recommend physical therapy, drug treatment, or in more serious cases, surgery. There also are some simple things you can do at home to help keep your pet comfortable and to monitor whether their pain level is changing. (Check with your veterinarian first to make sure these won't harm your pet.) Massaging your pet from head to toe will help relax and soothe. This organized form of petting is a great way to bond with your buddy as well as to notice any unusual bumps, scrapes, or bruises on the body.

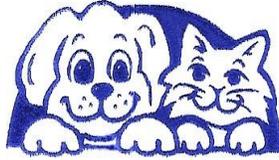
**Watch for changes** in how your pet responds to exercise. If he's acting sluggish, you may need to reduce his activity, or it may mean that chronic pain is developing. His ability to exercise will depend on his health, however, so make sure he has a thorough veterinary physical before he starts a new exercise program. (Ask your vet for appropriate exercise options.)

**Watch his diet.** What you feed your little friend will help maintain his weight, regularity, and physical health, all of which can affect how well he feels. Don't let your pet overeat and don't let yourself over-treat him. Also, with certain conditions, your pet may need a special diet. Consult your veterinarian before you make any dietary changes.

(continued)

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## Treatment choices and considerations

The standard form of treatment for pain is with medication. There are new and varied forms of prescriptions currently available. Aside from pill form, many drugs come in easily administered forms such as liquids, skin patches or gels. There are also new analgesic (pain-reducing) products to help treat your pet after an injurious trauma or to help treat chronic pain. Traditionally, steroids have been used for anti-inflammatory purposes and to decrease pain, but they can have adverse side effects. Although effective, steroids generally aren't used for prolonged periods, and it is crucial that you dispense them following your veterinarian's instructions. Additionally, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS) are often used to treat orthopedic-related pain with fewer side effects.

**ALERT!** It is very important that you not try to medicate your pet yourself.

1. Certain painkillers, including acetaminophen (found in Tylenol), or combinations of medications can be toxic to pets in very small doses.
2. Steroids and NSAIDS should never be given together.

**Do not give your pet any medication without consulting your veterinarian.**

For chronic pain such as arthritis, back pain or pain from cancer, complementary or alternative options (in addition to pharmaceutical treatment) are becoming more available. **Acupuncture** has been shown to provide relief in some situations and is now available at Parkside Animal Hospital on a limited basis.

## After surgery

Pain management becomes particularly important after surgeries. When recovering from invasive procedures, animals may be not only in pain, but also weak and disoriented. When you're finally able to bring home your precious pet after a procedure, the best thing you can do is follow your veterinarian's instructions carefully and consistently. If your veterinarian prescribes an analgesic for your pet, give it to her as directed. If any problems should develop, contact your veterinarian immediately. Have a cushy, warm bed ready and waiting to help your friend rest, stay quiet, and feel safe and secure at home. Keep Spot or Fluffy from picking at stitches (often a special collar will be recommended to prevent this from happening). Be attentive and loving. The comfort of your attention and affection may be just what the doctor ordered.

As with any medical condition, your veterinarian is your best ally in identifying and managing your pet's pain. Pain management requires a team effort, but the end result can be a happier and healthier companion.

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## WHEN TO CALL YOUR VETERINARIAN

Your pet needs to be seen if showing these symptoms..

- Difficulty breathing **This is an emergency!**
- Excessive panting, coughing
- Hit by car or attacked by other animal. **Emergency!**
- Open mouth breathing in a cat. **This is an emergency!**
- Bleeding or discharge. **Likely emergency!**
- Sudden swelling anyplace on your pet. **Especially face.. emergency!**
- Anorexia (not eating) longer than 24 hours.. particularly in a cat.
- Vomiting: if episodes occur over more than 24 hours, or more than 3 times a day.
- Diarrhea: if episodes occur over more than 24 hours, or more than 3 times a day.
- Having seizures. **Call! Possible emergency, depending on situation!** If pet presently under treatment for seizures, proceed as previously directed, then notify us.
- Inappropriate urination or elimination in a pet previously reliable in house-training.
- Inability to pass urine, even when straining. **This is an emergency!**
- Lethargy or weakness.
- Bloating abdomen. **This is an emergency!**
- Heat stroke. **This is an emergency!**
- Limping.
- Excessive drinking or excessive urination.
- Possible broken bones. **Possible emergency!**
- Excessive shaking, scratching or licking.
- Vocalizing, crying in excess, whimpering.
- Odor from ears.
- Eye injury. **Emergency!**
- Bad breath.
- Scooting
- Changes in behavior, ie.. becomes nippy or snappish; or withdraws from involvement with family or other pets in household.
- **.. ANYTIME you have a concern.**

If you are unsure about the significance of symptoms in your pet, call to speak with one of our trained veterinary technicians.

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## Veterinary technicians at Parkside Animal Hospital



Jessica, Lead Tech. & Luv Bug



Melissa & Risky



Steve & LOA rescue kittens



Jamie & Sam



Ashley & Chicory



Katy & Mystic



Rhonda, PCC & Molly



Ashley & Diesel



Heather & Mina

Friendly faces, caring hearts

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" My little dog - a heartbeat at my feet." ~Edith Wharton

"A cat's eyes are windows enabling us to see into another world." - Irish Legend

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