
Rehabilitation at Veterinary Surgical Centers (VSCR) promotes multimodal pain management for the best pain control with fewer side effects. Pharmaceutical and complementary modalities are recommended based on a pet's individual needs.

What are the signs that pets are in pain?

Unfortunately, pets do not always communicate their pain with us in obvious ways. Most patients do not cry out or limp until their pain is significant. Each pet is unique and has different pain tolerances and behaviors that may interfere with identifying his or her discomfort.

Common signs that may indicate discomfort in your pet:

Dogs

- Unwillingness to greet owner
- Aggression
- Slow to rise, refusing to move
- Less willing or unable to navigate stairs
- Decreased appetite
- Self-mutilation
- Whimpering/howling

Cats

- Less willing or unable to jump
- Reduced activity
- No grooming or excessive grooming in some cases
- Hiding
- Pawing at the mouth, dropping food
- Stiff posture/gait
- Tail flicking

Is pain just a normal part of aging?

Weakness and pain do not need to accompany aging. In itself, age is not a disease—we just tend to see more problems as we age. Unfortunately, we also see young animals with weakness or pain. By working with your veterinarian and practitioner to identify a problem, you can help make your pet more comfortable and improve his or her quality of life.

Based on your pet's needs and concurrent conditions, a variety of options are available:

- Pharmaceutical intervention: New research and drug development are expanding our options for veterinary pain control.
- Physical rehabilitation: Manual therapy, massage, and strengthening can help to alleviate pain and build strength to support diseased joints.
- Low level laser therapy: Light therapy is used to promote healing and pain relief for a variety of conditions.
- Ultrasound and electrostimulation
- Acupuncture: Dry needle, aquapuncture, or electroacupuncture are used to stimulate endorphin release and other mechanisms of pain relief.
- Additional modalities: Shock wave therapy, stem cell therapy, and platelet-rich plasma therapy
- Orthotics and prosthetics