

## As our dogs get older, symptoms of arthritis start to “crop up”

At first, we can minimize the symptoms with nothing but exercise and good low body weights. Eventually a dog needs some medications. Well, usually. Really SKINNY dogs can sidestep arthritis. Truly. Here’s the “order” which we will sometimes roll up on “old age” and painful joints

| STAGE OF ARTHRITIS                                                                 | RECOMMENDATION                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | NOTES                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
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| Occasional arthritis not weight-related                                            | Lowest possible body weight<br>Limit carbohydrate intake<br>Continue exercise<br>Aspirin as needed but no more than four doses per week. Lowest possible body weight.                                                                                                                                                                                     | Longevity in the face of arthritis is tied to low body weight AND healthy teeth. Aspirin can have deleterious effects on the gastro-intestinal tract and platelets.                                                         |
| Slow getting up<br>Reluctant to climb stairs<br>No limping<br>No back pain         | "As Needed" on sore days: Deramax or other COX II Inhibitor. Rimadyl, Mobic, and others are similar but there are differences. Plus all the above medications and husbandry.                                                                                                                                                                              | When given all the time, Deramax requires bi-ennial bloodwork to ascertain the liver and kidneys aren't being harmed. Lowest possible body weight.                                                                          |
| Occasional limping and fairly regular slow-to-get up. The dog that's "arthritic".  | Deramax daily. It's not a bad idea to start Phycox at this point. Limit weight to a Body Condition Score of 4minus or even 3plus.<br><a href="https://drjohnson.com/bcs">https://drjohnson.com/bcs</a>                                                                                                                                                    | <b>Phycox</b> has a very positive effect on the hips in canines. Much better than its effect on knees. I don't know why. Lowest possible body weight.                                                                       |
| Lameness and arthritic symptoms a fairly persistent. Quality of life is declining. | TRIAD is a good idea.<br><a href="https://drjohnson.com/triad">https://drjohnson.com/triad</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>TRIAD</b> can be made with Deramax, Gabapentin, Methocarbamol. Another TRIAD is Deramax, Tramadol and Gabapentin. Lowest possible body weight.                                                                           |
| Arthritis is pretty severe, lameness and ability to get around is compromised.     | TRIAD with <b>all four</b> components and all husbandry above. NEVER stop exercising a dog. Lowest possible body weight.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Deramax and Gabapentin and Tramadol and Methocarbamol<br>Meds can be given "at different times" from each other so they don't "stack" and cause undesirable sedation. Dogs get used to the sedative effects. Don't give up. |
| Last Stop for Arthritis                                                            | We finally swap out <b>Prednisone</b> for the Deramax. Using a steroid in place of an NSAID is a "game changer" and a renaissance of mobility can sometimes be had for a little while. Steroids have their own side effects including exacerbation of heart problems and aggravation of diabetes and pancreatitis.<br><b>Lowest possible body weight.</b> | TRIAD can be made with PREDNISONE, Gabapentin, Methocarbamol. Another TRIAD is PREDNISONE, Tramadol and Gabapentin.                                                                                                         |