

Comfort & Pain Relief

How Your Dog is Telling You They're in Pain



Sometimes when your dog speaks, you know just what they're saying. "I'm hungry." "I wanna go outside!" "The cat stole my bed again." Yet when your dog's in pain, it may be harder to decipher.

The most common chronic pain seen in dogs is osteoarthritis (OA). When in the comfort of your home, you're in the best position to recognize what your dog is telling you about her OA pain. Your dog is more at ease at home, making it easier to notice if they're acting differently. If you notice signals of pain, make an appointment with your veterinarian. Along with their help, you can potentially slow OA's progression and ease your pup's discomfort.

Your dog's pain language is a language of signs. These signs of pain can be physical, such as limping, hesitation to jump, slow to rise, and lagging behind on walks. The signs can also be emotional, like changes in a dog's happiness and energy levels. In fact, in a recent study,¹ these signs were used to help assess how much OA pain the dog was feeling.

In that study, pet owners were given a short questionnaire that asked about their dog's at-home behavior. Pet owners recorded changes in their dog's levels of emotional well-being (happiness, calmness, contentedness, comfort) and physical well-being (energy, enthusiasm, activity, and relaxation). Changes in these behaviors helped both the pet owner and their veterinarian identify and understand what the dogs were saying about their pain.

Visit [OAChecklist.com](https://www.oachecklist.com) to identify your dog's activities and behaviors that may be signs of osteoarthritis and OA-related pain.

If you suspect that your dog is telling you they might have OA, it's important to make an appointment with your veterinarian for an OA screening. If it's determined that your dog has OA, your veterinarian may recommend a comprehensive treatment plan. Fortunately, there are treatment options that can safely help ease the pain of OA. In the study discussed above, the long-term treatment option used was a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID), which has been found to be safe for long-term use.

The sooner osteoarthritis is diagnosed, the better your dog's outlook and quality of life can be.¹ And that should come as a clear sign of happiness.

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Learn more at zoetispetcare.com

1. Reid J, Wright A, Gober M, Nolan, A.M, et al. (2018). Measuring chronic pain in osteoarthritic dogs treated long-term with carprofen, through its impact on health-related quality of life (HRQL). *Vet Comp Orthop Traumatol*. 31(S 01): A1-A6.
2. Jergler D. What are the benefits of long-term NSAIDs? A look at the research. *Veterinary Practice News*. Available at: <https://www.veterinarypracticenews.com/what-are-the-benefits-of-long-term-nsaids/>. Accessed March 7, 2018.

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