

Hip Dysplasia (HD or CHD)

What is it?

A malformation of the hip socket that can cause arthritic changes, pain, and lameness.

What causes it?

There is a genetic component, but exact genetics are unknown at this time. It is certainly polygenic, meaning that several genes are responsible.

Dysplasia starts with just a small amount of looseness (laxity) in the hip joint. When that joint is loose, it leads to more wear and tear, which remodels bone, making the joint even looser. It is a vicious circle, and is considered degenerative.

Environmental stressors such as age-inappropriate exercise, carrying extra weight, repetitive motion, rough playing, jumping on hard surfaces are all implicated in increased risk of developing HD.



Signs & Symptoms

Restricted movement walking/running and/or jumping, bunny-hopping, stiffness or abnormal posture in the spine and difficulty standing back up from a position of laying down. A dog in pain can be irritable, stiff, reluctant to engage in activity (especially if previously enjoyed), lethargic, and might shy away from having the area flexed or touched.

Diagnosis:

Confirmation of hip dysplasia is done via radiographic imaging.

Prevention:

Puppies should have age-appropriate exercise. Keep your puppy lean as he grows. Excess weight has been proven to increase risk of HD. Prevent putting your dog in a situation where slippery surfaces could precipitate a fall, slick wooden or tile floors are better off with a few area rugs.

Treatment

Treatment goals are to reduce pain, and maintain or increase mobility.

Weight must be kept lean, excess weight exacerbates symptoms and pain and can contribute to added wear and tear. Supplements that support joint health may be given.

Pharmaceutical options can be recommended by the vet. Pain relievers, anti-inflammatories, and mild opiates are the most common medications used.

Surgical options consist of hip replacement. Mesenchymal stem cell treatment and platelet-rich plasma injections are non-surgical options.

Exercise is good, but must be low-impact and easy on the dog's joints. Swimming is a great option, as are slow walks.

*This information is not meant to be a substitute for veterinary care.
Always follow the instructions provided by your veterinarian.*

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