

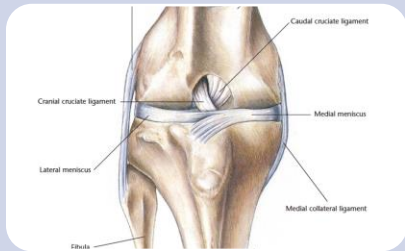
OSTEOARTHRITIS IN CATS

Osteoarthritis aka Degenerative Joint Disease, as the name suggests is a degenerative condition which progressively gets worse with age. It is characterised by inflammation and degeneration of the joint cartilage and remodelling of underlying bone. This results in joint pain thus reduced function and performance.

Cats like most get OA in a number of ways:

- ❖ Repetitive trauma this can occur due to poor conformation, action or wear and tear in athletic animals.
- ❖ Injuries and fractures can also cause OA.

Joint structure:

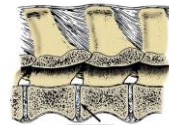


Synovial joints are the most common joint. They have a greater freedom of movement. The synovial membrane produces synovial fluid making them a lubricated joint.



Fibrous joints have no cavity, they are connected by dense connective tissue. They are fixed joints, such as the skull.

Cartilaginous Joints



Cartilagenous joints are joints connected purely by cartilage. One place they can be found is between intervertebral discs.

Examples of synovial joints

Osteoarthritis

NATOMEXPLORER BY CALLIMEDIA CAT & DOG ROYAL CANIN

- Decreased activity
- Difficulty getting up
- Fore or hind limb lameness
- Reluctance to use stairs
- Reluctance to jump
- Decreased range-of-motion of the joints
- Crepitus and discomfort on joint manipulation

Normal Moderate Severe

Inflammation

New bone formation
Erosion of cartilage

How to keep your cat's joints healthy:



Ideally exercises which put excessive strain on the joints should be avoided. Such as jumping from a height. Light/moderate regular exercise is recommended. Trying to play games which mirror their natural predator instincts is the most effective way to encourage controlled exercise. With cats it is hard to restrict them if they are outdoor cats. In severe cases some patients would be best being kept indoor to restrict the exercise to controlled movement. Some cats will tolerate harness walks and hydrotherapy.

To prevent your cat from jumping in the house steps can be adapted to aid them in getting on to surfaces. Ensuring multiple food and water bowls at different heights is also helpful as this gives them choice. Low entry litter trays and comfy padded beds near radiators are very helpful in the colder months. Heat packing of effected joints not only helps alleviate pain but also increases blood flow,.



Ensure little things such as dematting is done regularly, do not let nails overgrow as this affects their natural balance, causes discomfort and can create compensations in the other limbs due to pain. Grooming is an easy and effective therapy you can do at home.



Working with your vet to ensure accurate diagnosis and appropriate treatment to alleviate pain and improve quality of life.



Weight management is crucial. Underweight= Lack of muscle to support joints. Overweight=Increase load through joints, mechanical stress. Know your horse's ideal weight



Joint supplements and complementary therapies such as Veterinary Physiotherapy and acupuncture can be beneficial forms of pain relief. Physiotherapy will help maintain muscle mass thereby supporting joints and improving function.

Weight management:

If your cat has any issues with weight management the best thing to do is speak to your vet or vet nurse regarding nutrition. Often there are diets available to help maintain a healthy weight. It is increasingly difficult to keep cats active especially when they are diagnosed with OA ensuring the right diet is one way you can improve their quality of life.

Greencross Vet Resonate about Pets		CAT Body Condition SCORE CHART		Sponsored by ROYAL CANIN	
TOO THIN	1		1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ribs, spine and pelvic bones are easily visible• All of the bones are lying just under the skin• Little or no muscle mass	
	2		2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ribs, spine, pelvic bones and lumbar vertebra obvious with minimal muscle mass• Pronounced abdominal tuck• No detectable fat deposits	
	3		3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ribs, spine and pelvic bones visible• Obvious waist• Minimal abdominal fat/ribs can be felt easily	
	4		4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ribs and spine are palpable with minimal fat covering• Obvious waist• Abdominal fat pad is minimal	
IDEAL	5		5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Well proportioned• Ribs, spine and pelvic bones not visible but easily felt• Obvious abdominal tuck• Even muscle mass• Minimal abdominal fat	
TOO HEAVY	7		7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ribs, spine and pelvic bones not easily felt due to moderate fat covering• Waist is diminished• Rounding of abdomen with moderate abdominal fat pad	
	8		8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ribs, spine and pelvic bones are not easily felt with excess fat covering• Waist not visible due to excess fat• Obvious rounding of abdomen with excessive fat pad and fat deposits on the base of tail	
	9		9	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Waist is absent• Extensive and obvious abdominal fat• Ribs, spine and pelvic bones cannot be felt	