



### **How to keep your dog mobile and healthy for Senior Dog Month.**

Old Buster is getting on a bit. We've had him since he was a puppy. The first time he spotted his tail and said to himself, "Wait a minute, what's that?" he melted our hearts and we knew we'd love him forever.

Buster has been in and out of the vets for regular stuff like shots and the odd tumble once or twice, usually something stuck in his paw. He looked really sorry for himself after the porcupine incident, like he was saying, "I know, right? Again. Sorry."

He's part of the family, sometimes the glue of the family. Pretty much as soon as my little 7 year old, Emily, was born she was licked mercilessly by our Buster and it was the first time she really belly-laughed.

Buster is 10 years old now and, although he knows his red squeaky ball doesn't get chased down and returned as quickly as it used to, he still loves life as much as he ever did. We live near the sea and when I wind up my pitch to send his ball into the water, he's already way ahead of me, pretty much hitting the water at the same time as the ball.

Like all dog owners, we want the moments of magic and love we've experienced with our Buster to continue as long as possible.

And that means he needs our help to [stay in shape](#) and avoid some of the things that can bother an older dog. As owners, we need to be aware of the signs that Buster might be experiencing any pain or other mobility issues.

### **Common Signs of Pain in Dogs**

According to the International Veterinary Academy of Pain Management, some of the most common signs that your dog is in pain include:

- **Decreased activity:** If your normally playful and energetic dog is not as active as usual, they might be in pain.
- **Not going up or down stairs:** Dogs who formerly would take the stairs at a brisk pace but now either avoid them entirely or approach steps gingerly could be suffering from a condition such as osteoarthritis.
- **Difficulty standing up after laying down:** If it seems like your dog is moving slowly or stiffly after laying down, know that this can also be a sign of osteoarthritis or other conditions.
- **Decreased appetite:** While a number of conditions — both serious and not — can result in a loss of appetite, your dog may be avoiding eating due to mouth pain.
- **Overgrooming or licking in a certain area:** Licking can be an indication of a “hot spot” caused by allergies or insect bites. However, it can also be a result of pain.

### **Common Conditions Resulting in Pain**

You should always have your vet diagnose the source of pain. They can diagnose the underlying cause and make healthy recommendations for pain support for your dog. There are several common conditions that can result in pain for your dog, such as:

#### Pancreatitis

This condition occurs when the pancreas, an organ near the stomach that helps to digest food and control blood sugar, becomes inflamed. Ingestion of fatty table foods such as bacon or salmon skin can help contribute to the development of pancreatitis. It can also be a side effect of prescribed medication that your dog is taking for other conditions. Symptoms include loss of appetite, isolation, a pain response when the belly is probed, low energy, and diarrhea.

#### Intervertebral Disc Disease

Also known as IVDD, this condition occurs when one or more of the discs in the spine ruptures after physical activity. This is a degenerative condition that presents with stiffness in the head, neck, or back, a hunched back, pain response to touch, and dragging one or more legs when walking.

#### Osteoarthritis

Also known as arthritis or degenerative joint disease, this condition occurs when joint cartilage erodes — generally as a result of age — and causes bone-on-bone contact in the joint. Signs of osteoarthritis include:

- Difficulty moving
- Limping
- Lameness in front or hind legs
- Chewing or biting the area of pain

### Bone Cancer

Many different types of cancer afflict dogs, but bone cancer is among the most painful. This condition is commonly experienced by dogs who have previously had broken bones or surgical implants to repair broken bones. It presents with lethargy, limping, weakness, a swollen upper or lower jaw, and difficulty opening the mouth.

### Periodontal Disease

Also known as gum disease, this is a degenerative condition that results from untreated gingivitis in your dog's mouth. The condition results in bone decay, tooth loosening, and loss of teeth. All of these are quite painful for your dog.

## **Solutions and Pain Support for Your Dog**

There are several different natural remedies for the inflammation and pain experienced by dogs due to osteoarthritis, tooth problems, and other health issues.

While you should always consult your vet if you believe your dog is in pain, there are a variety of natural solutions that can help reduce the pain associated with these conditions.

### Green-Lipped Mussel

Green-lipped mussel provides relief for a number of conditions, including joint pain from osteoarthritis, hip dysplasia, and other conditions. This natural supplement also reduces inflammation and stress caused by pain and discomfort and can help restore mobility. Green-lipped mussel is a species of mussel. It acts as a filter in the sea off the coast of New Zealand. It is high in nutrients, including omega-3 fatty acids, amino acids, enzymes, and the effective joint relief chemicals provided by glucosamine and chondroitin.

### Roe Oil

Roe oil is a type of fish oil derived from the herring roe. This oil is also high in omega-3 fatty acids that assist with joint pain. Roe oil also relieves itchy skin and improves the health of your dog's coat.

### Broad-Spectrum Hemp Extract

Broad-spectrum hemp extract is a THC-free compound derived from the hemp plant that provides benefits for your dog, including:

- Reducing anxiety
- Building your fur baby's immune system
- Protecting your dog against new tumors
- Relieving nerve-related pain and inflammation

It can also increase appetite and control nausea. This allows dogs who have lost their appetite as a result of pain to obtain the nourishment they need.

So it's now November. Senior pet month and we're going to get hold of all the things our Buster needs for the springtime of his winter and beyond, even before we see any signs of problems. We're going to get ahead of it and, if it ever happens, stay on top of it.

[All-natural alternatives](#) to pharmaceuticals, like green-lipped mussel, Wild New Zealand Roe Oil and all the things in our list above.

The inflammation-fighting and calming properties of domestically-produced broad-spectrum [hemp extract](#) also relieves discomfort, prevents degeneration of joints, and helps provide pain support.

Buster is perfectly fine, still the cheeky muppet he's always been, and we're going to make sure he stays that way.