

Arthritis in Dogs and Cats

Family Matters

Many people believe arthritis is simply a normal part of getting older.

It isn't.

Age increases the risk of arthritis, but **pain should never be accepted as a normal part of ageing.**

At Amity, we believe that recognising arthritis early can dramatically improve your pet's quality of life. Our purpose is to **Empower You Through Education**, helping you recognise the signs and understand how we can help your pet stay active and comfortable for as long as possible.

What Is Arthritis?

Arthritis is the gradual wear and inflammation of a joint.

As the smooth cartilage becomes damaged, movement becomes uncomfortable and the joint becomes less flexible.

Arthritis usually develops slowly over months or years, which is why many pets adapt so gradually that owners don't realise how much they're struggling.

What Are the Signs?

Many pets with arthritis don't cry or limp dramatically.

Instead, you'll notice subtle changes such as:

- Reluctance to jump onto furniture.
- Hesitating before climbing stairs.
- Sleeping more.
- Becoming slower on walks.
- Stiffness after resting.
- Difficulty getting up.
- Slipping on smooth floors.
- Becoming less playful.
- Becoming grumpier when touched.

Cats are particularly good at hiding arthritis. Many simply stop jumping onto worktops or windowsills and spend more time sleeping.

How Is Arthritis Diagnosed?

Often, a combination of your observations and a physical examination gives us strong clues.

We assess how your pet walks, examine the joints and look for reduced movement, swelling or discomfort.

In some cases, X-rays may be recommended to confirm the diagnosis or assess how severely the joints have been affected.

Can Arthritis Be Cured?

Unfortunately, arthritis cannot be reversed.

However, it can often be **managed extremely successfully**, allowing many pets to enjoy a happy, active life for years.

The earlier we begin treatment, the better the long-term outcome is likely to be.

How Do We Treat Arthritis?

There isn't one single treatment.

Instead, we usually combine several approaches, including:

- Weight management.
- Regular, appropriate exercise.
- Pain relief.
- Joint supplements where appropriate.
- Physiotherapy or hydrotherapy.
- Home modifications such as ramps, supportive bedding and non-slip flooring.

Every pet is different, so treatment is tailored to their individual needs.

Weight Matters More Than You Think

Even a small amount of excess weight places significantly more stress on painful joints.

Helping an arthritic pet reach a healthy weight is one of the most effective ways of improving comfort and mobility.

Sometimes losing weight has as much impact as medication.

Small Changes Make a Big Difference

Simple changes at home can transform your pet's comfort.

Soft bedding.

Shorter, more frequent walks.

Non-slip rugs.

Raised food bowls where appropriate.

Helping them into the car instead of expecting them to jump.

These small adjustments often make everyday life much easier.

Comfort Is the Goal

At Amity, we don't judge success by what an X-ray looks like.

We judge it by whether your pet is enjoying life.

Are they happy to go for a walk?

Can they climb onto the sofa again?

Are they playing, exploring and greeting you at the door?

That's what truly matters.

At Amity, **Amity Essential Membership includes unlimited health checks**, allowing us to monitor your pet's mobility, adjust treatment as their needs change and help them remain comfortable throughout their senior years.

Because growing older shouldn't mean living with unnecessary pain.

Because they're not just your pet.

They're family.

Family Matters.

If you need more information, book an appointment with an Amity vet. We're here to Empower You Through Education and help you become your pet's greatest advocate.