

How to Tell if Your Dog is in Pain.

Dogs feel pain for many of the same reasons as humans: infections, dental problems, arthritis, bone disease and cancer. They also feel discomfort following surgical procedures.

Unfortunately, unlike humans, they are unable to speak to us about when and where they hurt.

You are in the best position to look for the subtle changes in behavior that may indicate your pet is suffering. It's important to stay alert to these signs, because the sooner your dog's pain is diagnosed and treated, the sooner he or she can heal and resume a normal, happy life.

If your dog shows one or more of these behaviors and you suspect it may be due to pain, notify your veterinarian immediately.



Vocalizing:

- Whining
- Howling
- Whimpering
- Yelping
- Groaning
- Grunting

Daily Habits:

- Decreased appetite
- Withdraws from social interaction
- Changes in sleeping or drinking
- Lapses in housetraining
- Sleeps more

Self-Mutilation:

- Licking
- Biting
- Scratching a particular part of its body

Activity Level:

- Restless
- Reluctant to move
- Difficulty getting up from a laying position
- Repetitively gets up and lies down
- Trembling, circling or lying very still
- Seeks more affection than usual

Facial Expression:

- Grimaces, vacant stare
- Glazed, wide-eyed or looks sleepy
- Enlarged pupils
- Flattened ears
- Pants excessively when at rest

Grooming:

- Coat lacks normal shine
- Hair stands up in places

Self-Protection:

- Protects a body part
- Doesn't put weight on a limb
- Limp
- Doesn't want to be held or picked up
- Hides

Aggressive:

especially a previously friendly dog

- Acts out of character
- Growls, hisses, bites
- Pins ears back
- A normally aggressive dog may act quiet, docile

Posture:

- Hunched, with hindquarters raised and front end down on the ground
- Lays on its side