



## PAIN RELIEF OPTIONS FOR DOGS



We live in the golden age of pain relief for animals! There are lots of treatment options available to treat pain and discomfort caused by the various diseases and processes that affect modern pets. Each pet is unique in what combination may work best for them and deserves an individualized approach to pain management. Below is some information on the most common types of pain medications, supplements, and treatments currently available. This is not a complete list. Please do not hesitate to ask us any questions. We all want to make your best friend comfortable and happy!

### ***Oral Medications (Pills)***

NSAID (such as Carprofen, Meloxicam, and Previcox)

The equivalent of doggy Advil (Do NOT give actual human Advil to dogs. It is very dangerous.)

Benefits: Very rapid and effective pain control. Excellent for muscle or joint pain. Can be used short term or long term. No risk of sedation. Very commonly used. Very well studied.

Downsides: Need to regularly check bloodwork to ensure your pet's kidneys and liver are doing well on the medicine. Interacts with several other medicines and some interactions are serious. Can upset a pet's stomach.

Gabapentin

Benefits: Has both pain relieving and calming effects. Rapid action. Can be used long or short term. Frequently used with other medications to make both more effective. Inexpensive.

Downsides: Can cause drowsiness and wobbliness. Overdoses and drug interactions can be serious. May not be fully effective alone; works better as a "side-kick" with another medication.

Tramadol

Benefits: Helpful additional treatment for pain. Helps calm pets that are painful. Inexpensive. Can be used short or long term.

Downsides: May not be fully effective alone. Interacts with several other medications. Can cause drowsiness.

### ***Injectable Medications***

Librela

Benefits: Once monthly arthritis pain control without oral medications (no pills!). Very safe and effective for chronic use. No home care needed.

Downsides: Only works for arthritis pain. May require more than one dose to reach full effectiveness. New drug.

Adequan

Benefits: Multi-month pain relief after treatment course. Well studied and helpful for preventing further joint damage. Can be combined with Acupuncture to make both last longer.

Downsides: May not be fully effective for pain relief on its own. Initial injection course requires frequent nurse visits. Typically takes several sessions to see an effect.

## ***Integrated Treatments***

### Acupuncture

Benefits: Holistic. Very effective pain control without using medications. Tailored for each pet individually. Very well studied and helpful for preventing further damage.

Downsides: Typically takes several visits to be fully effective. Your pet may be a bit sore for the rest of the day after sessions. More expensive than Carprofen. Only performed by specially trained veterinarians.

### Physical Therapy/Massage

Benefits: Holistic and very helpful for improving muscle pain and helping joints. Tailored for each pet individually. Physical therapy can strengthen muscles and improve quality of life. Pets tend to love massage sessions.

Downsides: Performed by specially trained veterinarians and nurses. Takes time to be effective. Pet may be sore after treatments.

### Medicinal LASER Therapy (NOT a cutting laser)

Benefits: Provides warmth under skin to relax muscles. Holistic. No treatment side effects at standard doses. Tailored for each pet individually. Well studied and helpful for healing muscle damage. Can be combined with Acupuncture to make both last longer.

Downsides: May take several visits to be fully effective. Your pet may be a bit sore for the rest of the day after sessions. May not be fully effective alone. More expensive than Carprofen.

## ***Oral Supplements***

### Fish Oil (also called Omega 3/6 Fatty Acids)

Benefits: Holistic. Effective for chronic pain conditions. Available over the counter. Helpful for preventing further joint damage.

Downsides: Not effective alone for acute pain control. For long term use only. Can cause weight gain or GI problems in some pets. Over the counter products can make your pet smell fishy.

### CBD (Cannabidiol)

Benefits: Holistic and herbal. Available over the counter. Preliminary research has been promising for pain and seizures. CBD does not contain THC so little to no risk of a "high"

CBD Downsides: Significant differences in effectiveness between brands and batches. Not regulated. There are a lot of doubtful advertisements about benefits. Some pets develop odd behaviors.

### Glucosamine Chondroitin

Benefits: Holistic. Available over the counter. May be helpful for preventing further joint damage. Safe and widely used.

Downsides: Inconsistent results in research studies. Not effective alone for acute pain control. For long term use only. Not regulated. May have significant variability between brands.

### Chinese Herbs (Body Sore, Fang Feng Tang etc)

Benefits: Holistic and herbal. Treatment is personalized for each pet. Several plants are combined to decrease the need for any one herb. Downsides: Some drug interactions. Can take several weeks to reach full effectiveness. May upset the stomach initially. Best prescribed by specially trained veterinarians.