As cats get older, they seem to sleep more and don’t want to play as much. That’s just them getting old, right? Not according to studies on their joints!

In 2002, a retrospective study looked at radiographs of 100 cats over 12 years of age. Evidence of degenerative joint disease was present in 90% of them. The number of cats with joint issues as a concern in their chart: 4…out of 100!

Cats don’t show us evidence of arthritis pain like dogs do. They are solitary hunters by nature-their instinct is to hide weakness. Instead of limping, they chose not to walk. If they can’t jump onto the counter anymore, they just don’t! The decrease in activity leads to weight gain, which makes their joints hurt even worse. So what can we do about it?

**Get them moving.** In joint disease it is SO important to move the joints to keep range of motion and muscle tone! Set aside 5-10 minutes daily for interactive playtime with your cat. Put a bird feeder up outside their favorite window. Set up boxes and newspapers with catnip to encourage play.

**Cut weight.** If your cat is fat, decrease their current feedings by 10%. Check out the latest food puzzles so they have to work for their dinner. If you have questions about helping your feline friend lose weight safely, please give us a call!

**Try a joint supplement recommended by your veterinarian.** We’ve already done the research for you! Go with a company that has great quality control and guarantees their product. If you’ve tried supplements from other brands, they may not have contained enough of their labeled ingredients (see Supplements Article in next month’s newsletter). For joint health, Dr. Gilbert and Dr. Brock recommend the following supplements in cats:

- Dasuquin Advanced from Nutramaxx-contains glucosamine, chondroitin, green tea complex, and Boswellia serrata extract
- Eicosacaps Omega-3 Fish Oil from Dechra-every study on Omega-3 fatty acids reveals health benefits (in this case, anti-inflammatory effects in the joints)

**Try a prescription diet for joint health from Royal Canin, Purina, or Science Diet.** Many of these contain the ingredients in the supplements above and are also guaranteed by the manufacturer. It doesn’t matter if there are four kibble left in the bag, we will refund your money. Give us a call to discuss prescription diet options!

**Consider laser treatment.** Viking Veterinary Care has a Class IV therapy laser that can actually stimulate healing of cartilage and bone damage! Check out our article on Laser Therapy in this issue. Laser treatment is less than 10 minutes and can be done as a technician appointment for $30. Our veterinarians recommend starting 2-3 times a week for 4 weeks, then decreasing to the lowest effective dosing. Effects are cumulative-with time you will see improvement! A recent exam is needed for this modality so the treatment area and settings can be personalized for your cat by the veterinarian.
Check out Adequan injections. Adequan is an injectable cartilage component known as polysulfated glucosaminoglycan. It is used off-label in cats, but there is a plethora of research on safety and efficacy. Adequan works by inhibiting harmful enzymes involved in joint cartilage destruction, stimulating cartilage repair, and increasing joint lubrication. The injections are given twice a week for 4 weeks (subcutaneously or intramuscularly), then decreased to the lowest possible dose that keeps your cat comfortable. We can show you how to do the injections if you are comfortable doing this at home. Adequan has also been shown to help with chronic cystitis found in cats with urinary issues.

Do a pain medication trial. Sometimes we just don’t know how bad the pain is inhibiting day-to-day activities until we eliminate it. We have a number of pain medications available for use in cats. A recent exam may be needed to determine musculoskeletal pain from nerve pain. This helps us come up with the best option for your kitty.

Get a physical therapy consultation. Sometimes we have to unravel the primary source of pain versus compensation injury and muscle imbalances. In addition to discussing exercise and environmental changes you can do at home, our veterinarians can examine all the treatment options above and help you determine what may work best for your kitty.

CATS OFTEN LIVE UP TO 20 YEARS!
LET’S MAKE SURE THEIR LAST DECADE IS AS PAIN-FREE AS POSSIBLE.

Introducing Dasuquin Advanced for Cats
Joint AND bladder support!

Contains:
- Glucosamine
- Chondroitin
- Avocado/soybean unsaponifiables (ASU)
- Boswellia serrata extract
- Green tea complex

Dasuquin stimulates production of cartilage matrix components, inhibits cartilage breakdown, and provides support for a healthy bladder lining in cats with urinary issues.

Comes in a capsule that can be swallowed or opened and sprinkled on food.

Money-back guarantee by the manufacturer!
The Use of Class IV Therapy Laser to Address Acute and Chronic Pain

Each month you see them: Animals in goggles on our Facebook page and newsletter, with a white wand pointed at their bodies by a technician in shades. The caption discusses “Class IV Therapy Laser Treatment”, but what’s it all about?

A Class IV therapy laser is NOT a cold laser. It has an output greater than 500mW. In 6 minutes, it can deliver over 5000 joules of energy deep into the tissues. It creates a warming sensation to area being treated that most pets find relaxing.

Our laser can also be used for stimulation of acupuncture points without needles (our feline friends especially seem to find this more acceptable). As Dr. Gilbert and Dr. Brock explore this modality more, we will be offering this option to our clients!

Laser is bad for eyes, cancer, and gonads. Sometimes pets will be a little sore after the first treatment from the increase in blood flow to the site (this usually resolves in 12-24 hours). Improvement if frequently seen immediately as pain reduction and decreased swelling.

Below are some of the most common situations where we use laser in our hospital. Laser treatments are typically under 10 minutes and cost $30. They can be performed as a technician appointment once the doctor has evaluated the medical condition and set up a laser protocol.

**Acute pain** may be present due to many reasons, including postoperative pain and trauma. After medical stabilization, the laser can be used to treat the incision directly, as well as the surrounding tissue.

Laser increases cell production of ATP, accelerating new cell growth and tissue repair. Wounds heal faster with less scar tissue. It increases blood flow to the affected area, providing more nutrients, and reduces swelling/edema.

A non-contact head is used over any surgical site and daily treatments are recommended for 1-3 days or until the pain and inflammation has subsided.

- Cruciate ligament tears (newly injured)
- Post-operative incision sites
- Muscle strains/sprains
- Tendon/ligament injuries
- Bite wounds
- Anal gland abscesses
- Dermatitis
- Trauma
- Fractures
- Infections
- Urinary obstruction/cystitis
- Pancreatitis
- Inflammatory bowel disease
- Ear infections and hematomas
- Burn injuries
- Frost bite
- Disc herniation
**We do not use laser post-operatively on mass removals until we have confirmed we have “clean margins”. We don’t want to help any cancer cells replicate!**

**Chronic pain** is often seen in the rehabilitation medicine. In musculoskeletal injury, pain leads to decreased strength, range of motion, and function. Laser treatment is directed at the painful region, referral sites, acupuncture points, and innervation. The effects of the laser are cumulative—often we can reduce the number and frequency of prescription medications with ongoing laser treatments.

Laser treatment helps normalize nerve signaling by suppressing the excitation of pain pathways. With the pain controlled, your pet is more likely to use an affected limb in a more normal manner, rebuilding muscle mass and correcting musculoskeletal imbalances. In addition to decreasing symptoms, laser also promotes healing. Both blood and lymphatic capillaries have been documented to increase and regenerate in the presence of laser. The subsequent increasing circulation and perfusion to the affected area enhances all repair and healing processes.

Treatment is usually recommended 2-3 times a week for 4 weeks, then as needed for maintenance. A rehabilitation program is also recommended to work on range of motion, strengthening, proprioception, and muscle imbalances from compensating for the injury.

- Cruciate ligament tears (old injuries)
- Degenerative joint disease
- Hip dysplasia/Elbow dysplasia
- Osteoarthritis
- Cartilage damage
- Intervertebral disc disease
- Gingivitis/dental disease


**Does your pet have a medical condition that may benefit from Class IV therapy laser treatment?**

Give us a call at 971-371-4024 or email us at [info@vikingveterinarycare.com](mailto:info@vikingveterinarycare.com) with questions or to schedule an appointment!

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Meet our newest Adoption Ward resident, Aspen! This big guy is a Snowshoe Siamese. He is VERY shy and takes a while to get accustomed to new environments or people, but once he does he is a big loverboy. Aspen does have a fractured tooth that will need to be repaired very soon. He has done well with other cats in the past and has been very patient with older children who have come to see him.

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The People Have Spoken!
Beginning July 19th, Viking Veterinary Care will be open Tuesdays from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
**PRODUCT SPECIALS**

**NexGard™ (afloxaner) Chewables**

**LAST MONTH FOR**
**BUY 2 GET 1 FREE!**

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- $15 Rebate when you buy 6 doses of Heartgard and 6 doses of Nexgard
- $12 rebate when you buy 12 doses of Heartgard
- $15 Rebate when you buy 6 doses of Heartgard and 6 doses of Nexgard
- $35 Rebate when you buy 12 doses of Heartgard and 6 doses of Nexgard
- $50 Rebate when you buy 12 doses of Heartgard and 12 doses of Nexgard

**ROYAL CANIN®**

SAVE $20 by mail when you buy two bags (7.7 lb or larger) or cases (24 cans) of any Canine or Feline ROYAL CANIN HYDROLYZED PROTEIN formulas, Canine ULTAMINO, or Canine SKIN SUPPORT from June 19th to September 10th.

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*Note: The above rebates are subject to availability and may vary. Always check with your local retailer for the most current information.*