



### ABOUT THE DISEASE

*Canine hip dysplasia (CHD)* is a condition that causes instability of the hip joint as patients are growing to adulthood. The laxity of the hip joint is responsible for hip pain, lameness, reluctance to rise or jump, shifting of weight to the forelimbs, loss of muscle mass on the rear limbs, and degenerative joint disease (osteoarthritis).

Over time the abnormal wear between the femur and the pelvis causes deformation of the hip joint which worsens joint degeneration and increases instability.

There are several different causes of **CHD** but genetics play the biggest role. Rapid weight gain and growth through excessive nutritional intake can also complicate the development of **CHD**.

Generally, patients are divided into two groups:

- Group 1 – Younger dogs without arthritis, but with significant hip laxity.
- Group 2 – More mature dogs that have developed hip arthritis.

Please see the [Osteoarthritis](#) document for additional information.

### OBTAINING A DIAGNOSIS

**CHD** is diagnosed by a combination of special limb manipulation and palpation, as well as specially positioned radiographs (x-rays).

Most accurately the veterinary team can be trained on how to take specific radiographs and submit the measurements to diagnose hip dysplasia or determine if young patients are at risk.

### TREATMENT

Management strategies are rather basic; they are either medical or surgical.

Medical management is similar to the strategies for osteoarthritis. Please see the [Osteoarthritis](#) document for additional information.

Surgical management will often end with either a total hip replacement or a femoral head osteotomy (FHO). Most patients cannot achieve high level activity without surgery. Please see the [Post-Op Femoral Head Osteotomy](#) document for additional information.

### TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Cartilage protective supplements are often recommended, but do not usually protect against wear and damage.
- Physical therapy can be used for both medical patients and surgical patients.