



Cinque Ports Vets/Milbourn Equine

Hawkhurst, Tenterden, Rye, Milbourn,
Lydd, Kingsnorth, Wye



Osteoarthritis Awareness Day

Kingsnorth Veterinary Centre hosted an osteoarthritis day on Sunday 10th October 2010. This was kindly sponsored by Merial.



The day was arranged to increase owner awareness of osteoarthritis in dogs. We invited dogs over 8 years of age along to the event as this is commonly the age that the symptoms can first appear.

On arrival the owners were asked a series of questions regarding their dog's health and fitness levels.



This was followed by a full veterinary examination by our head veterinary surgeon Sharon Marsh.

There were displays and information leaflets about osteoarthritis and the effects that it can have on your dog available for owners to read in the waiting room. Nibbles were provided for the owners and the dogs aswell!

Once the dogs had been examined by Sharon, a tour of our veterinary surgery was provided by our Branch Manager Sarah Startup. This allowed owners and their dogs to see behind the scenes of the surgery, including our operating theatre, laboratory and other facilities available. Our veterinary nurse Rachael Stooks was on hand to give advice to owners on their pet's weight and help with any dietary related problems. She was also able to advise about supportive treatments including joint supplements along with our receptionist Lorna Tudball.



Dogs that were found to have signs of osteoarthritis were prescribed anti inflammatories to help manage the signs and also a free trial of a nutraceutical (joint supplement of glucosamine and chondroitin) to help stimulate cartilage production which is broken down if your dog is suffering from osteoarthritis.

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Osteoarthritis (also known as degenerative joint disease) is a disease that can gradually creep up on your pet without you noticing. It is a chronic, degenerative and progressive disease which affects bone and cartilage in both cats and dogs as they become older. The capsule surrounding the joint becomes thickened and this restricts the amount of movement the joint can make. Sometimes the joints can make clicking or crunching noise when walking or become swollen.

The first signs are usually quite subtle:

- difficulty getting into the car
- stiffness when getting up from their bed
- sleeping in a different position that they find comfortable
- not wanting to go as far on their walk as they used to



Most owners will put these signs down to old age but unfortunately this can mean you are not aware that your pet is in discomfort or pain.



If you notice any of these signs no matter how subtle you should seek advice from your veterinary surgeon who can examine your pet. Sometimes your veterinary surgeon may recommend X-rays to establish how severe the problem is but osteoarthritis can be managed successfully with non steroidal anti inflammatories, joint supplements, weight control and carefully managed exercise levels.

Our veterinary nurses also run very successful 'Mobility and After Eight Clinics' which offers owners free advice on how to help look after their older pet and how to help them if they are suffering from osteoarthritis.

Our veterinary surgeon, Sharon Marsh said: 'It was a very positive day and there were quite a few dogs that were showing signs of osteoarthritis that will benefit from anti-inflammatory medication'.

Overall the day was a great success and we would like to thank Emma McAnally from Merial for supporting this scheme and the owners and their dogs who came along to help raise awareness of osteoarthritis.

