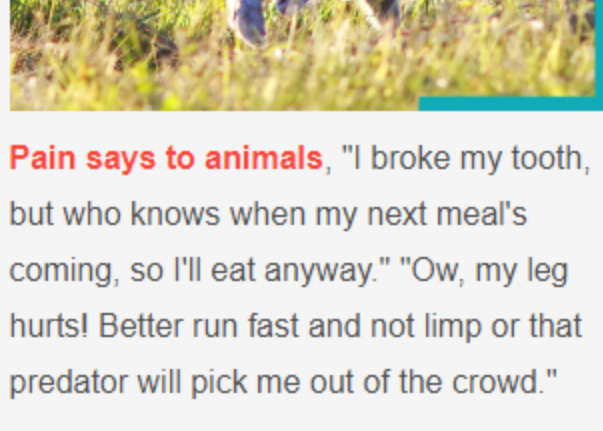


Best friend seem a bit off?

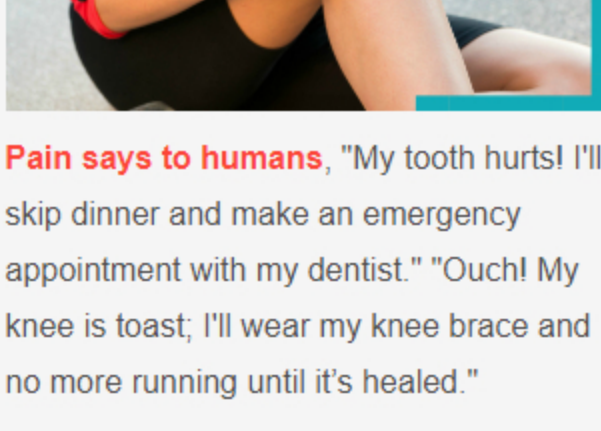


Pain may be to blame.

Pets are part of the family, but they aren't short, fuzzy humans. One of the biggest differences between us is the way pets feel and display pain. When pets feel pain, they don't come looking for a Band-Aid or moaning about their aches.



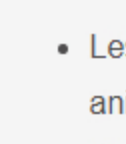
Pain says to animals, "I broke my tooth, but who knows when my next meal's coming, so I'll eat anyway." "Ow, my leg hurts! Better run fast and not limp or that predator will pick me out of the crowd."



Pain says to humans, "My tooth hurts! I'll skip dinner and make an emergency appointment with my dentist." "Ouch! My knee is toast; I'll wear my knee brace and no more running until it's healed."

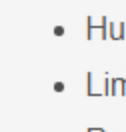
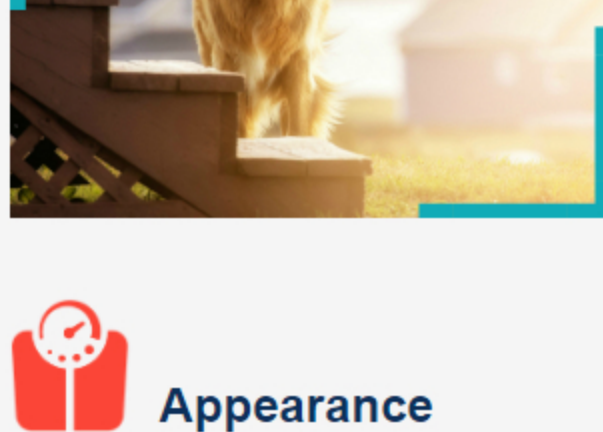
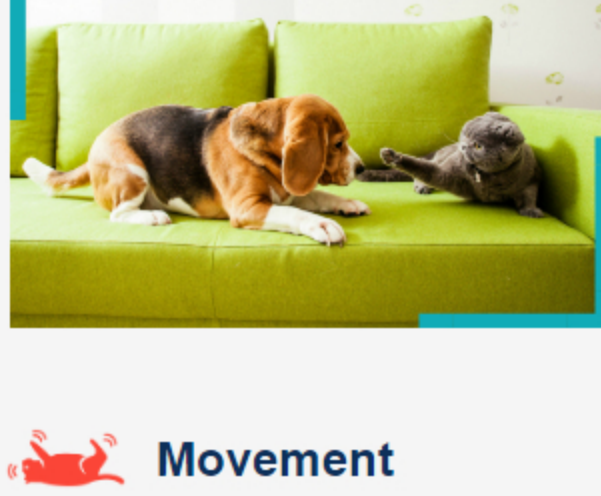
Hiding signs of pain and carrying on in spite of it are key tools of survival for animals. This means it can be really hard for pet owners to recognize when our pets are in pain, from arthritis to dental disease to an acute injury. So what does pain in pets look like? Well, a lot of different things! A good rule of thumb is to **consult us whenever you notice changes in your pet, or if something just seems off to you.**

Pain can look like changes in:



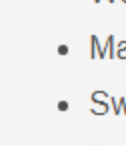
Personality

- Less interaction with human & animal friends
- Irritability/aggression
- No longer enjoying petting
- Loss of curiosity
- Hiding or not seeking attention



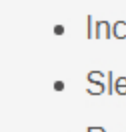
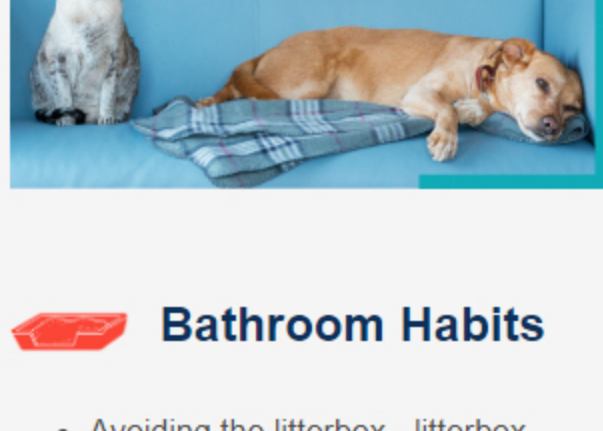
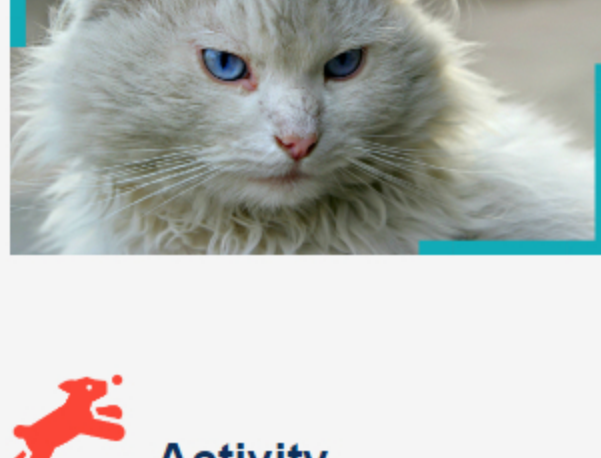
Movement

- Reluctance/difficulty climbing stairs
- Jumping up/climbing less
- Hunched or stiff posture
- Limping or odd gait, moving stiffly
- Resting in awkward positions
- Difficulty standing after lying down



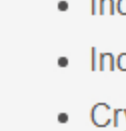
Appearance

- Weight loss or gain
- Matted fur/decrease in grooming
- Swellings
- Squinting or blinking
- Enlarged or small pupils
- Repetitive licking/chewing at areas



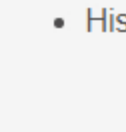
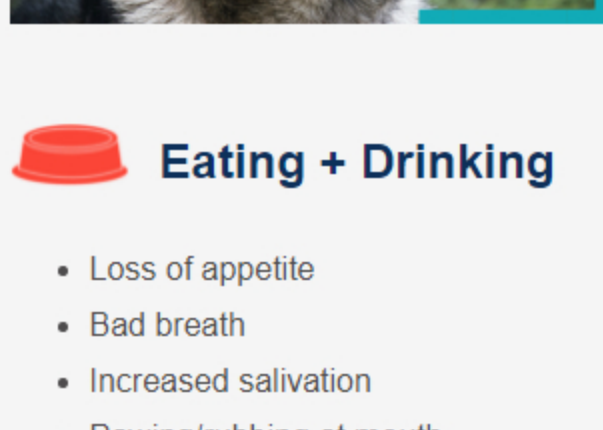
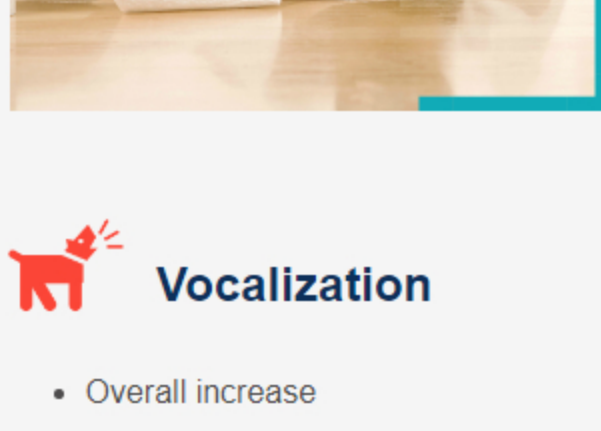
Activity

- Moving around less
- Less interest in play and walks
- Increased panting
- Sleeping more
- Restlessness can occur if unable to get comfortable due to pain



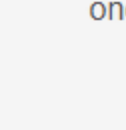
Bathroom Habits

- Avoiding the litterbox - litterbox issues are **not** normal and should be considered a red flag that something may be amiss.
- Incontinence/accidents in the house
- Increase or decrease in frequency
- Crying/vocalizing while eliminating



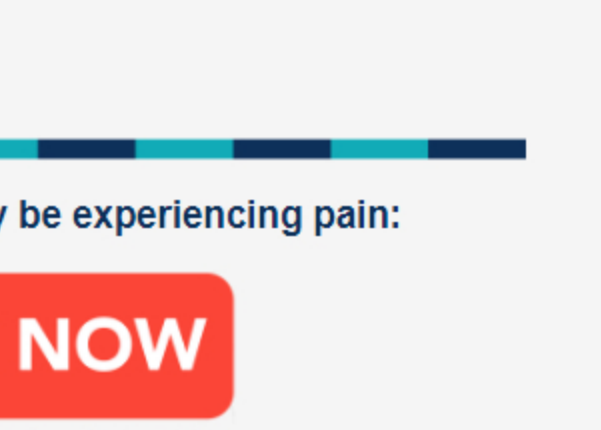
Vocalization

- Overall increase
- Growling
- Whimpering
- Meowing more or persistently
- Howling
- Hissing/spitting



Eating + Drinking

- Loss of appetite
- Bad breath
- Increased salivation
- Pawing/rubbing at mouth
- Eating or drinking more slowly or with difficulty (e.g. spilling food or water from mouth, chewing only on one side)



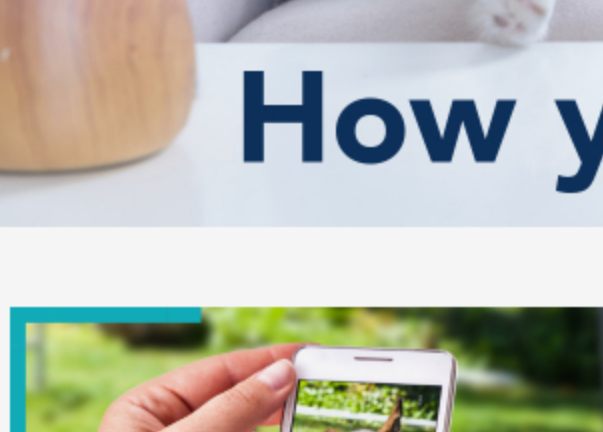
If you think your pet may be experiencing pain:

BOOK NOW

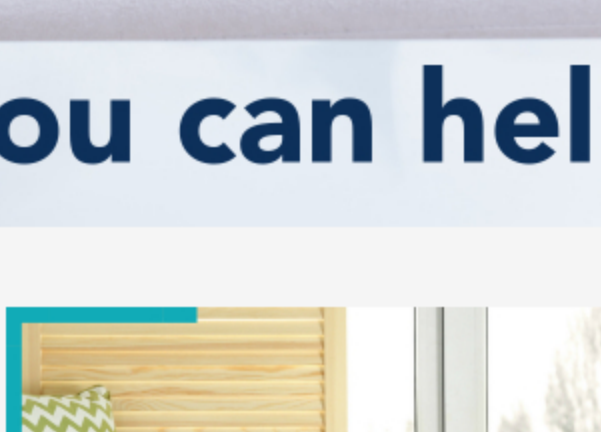
or call us at (713) 468-8253



How you can help



When your pet is normal, pay attention to how they behave. How do they move? Do they jump onto things? Run and play? Climb and jump? Seek attention? Come running for food? Keep a log of gradual changes. Pictures can help; video is even better, so grab your smartphone and start recording if you see your pet doing something at home you think we should see.



You can likely also help at home with some changes to your pet's environment to make things easier – a ramp down to the yard for your dog, a chair next to your kitty's favorite window seat, a raised food/water bowl, a lower sided litter box – smallish changes like these can make a world of difference in your pet's comfort level and quality of life. Ask us for recommendations for your pet.



Please contact us before administering pain medications.

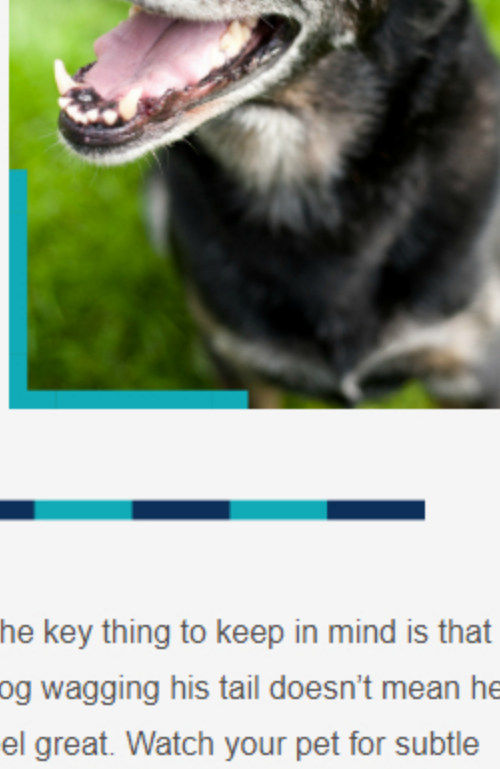
Dogs aren't furry people, and cats aren't small dogs. It's tempting to just grab the nearest pain reliever from your medicine cabinet, but human medications, including over-the-counter ones like Ibuprofen, Acetaminophen, and Naproxen sodium are **not** approved for use in pets and can result in death. NSAIDs approved for dogs are **not** safe to use on cats, who have a reduced ability to break them down. We'll recommend the safest, most effective treatment for your pet's pain.

A Special Note

on Senior Pets

While pets of any age can experience pain, senior pets are especially prone. Remember, old age is NOT a disease. While animals may slow down a bit as they age, there's no need for them to experience a loss of quality of life.

Musculoskeletal pain such as arthritis can be managed so your senior pet is comfortable, and "accidents" in the house are not normal signs of aging, but often are indications of conditions needing treatment.



We hope this information has been helpful to you! The key thing to keep in mind is that animals show pain much differently than we do. A dog wagging his tail doesn't mean he isn't in pain, and a cat purring in your lap may not feel great. Watch your pet for subtle signs of pain, and let us know when you see them so we can help. Please always feel free to contact us with any questions you may have at (713) 468-8253.

For more information on pets and pain, visit:
[Think Your Pet is Ouchy? Maybe She is Grouchy!](#)

Sincerely,
Your friends at Brittmoore Animal Hospital