

# Dogs and Treatment Options for Hip Dysplasia

**Q: My dog, a Newfoundland, was diagnosed with severe hip dysplasia and arthritis at 6-months-old. My vet at the time told me that he would eventually need a total hip replacement in both hips. He's now 10-years-old and getting around just fine. His hips seems to be OK — he kind of hops when he runs, but he's been doing that since he was young. Sometimes one of his hind legs will quiver, but again, it's been doing that since he was 1 or 2. He occasionally stumbles on his front legs and hits the ground face first — this started over the past year and happens every few walks. I know he has arthritis in his front elbows (they were x-rayed about 5 years ago). He's on Cosequin, but I'm wondering what more I can do to help? And is surgery something I will ever have to consider at this late stage in his life?**

A: There are many good pain medications that your veterinarian can offer to relieve the discomfort your dog is feeling. Medications for most dogs are safe but over time they could have effects on the kidney, liver and stomach. Surgical options should be reviewed with a specialist to weigh the pros and cons of treating an older patient with multiple joint issues. What you might want to consider is one of the exciting new therapies for arthritis in dogs. Stem Cells!

These stem cells actually come from your dog's own fat and are used to treat the joints that are being affected by this debilitating disease. Some pets have dramatic improvement and there are very little side effects. It's important that your dog is given a good physical exam to determine where the pain is and to make sure he is a good candidate for a quick surgical procedure to remove a small sample of fat. For example, many owners feel that their dog's hips are affected when in reality it may also be the knees contributing to their pain and immobility as well. After determining the joints of concern, your veterinarian would simply remove a few tablespoons of fat from your dog, ship it over night to a laboratory called Vet-Stem in San Diego where they would isolate your dog's stem cells from the fat sample and ship overnight back to your veterinarian. Many veterinarians are already certified in this new and exciting procedure, and your veterinarian can become certified to utilize this procedure by taking an on-line certification course that is hosted on the Vet-Stem website. If you would like to read more about this cutting edge therapy go to [www.Vet-Stem.com](http://www.Vet-Stem.com).