

Hip Dysplasia Screening

Hip dysplasia is the most common orthopedic disease of dogs.

This disease is an abnormal or faulty formation of the ball and socket of the hip joint. Abnormal development of the hip causes excessive wear of the joint cartilage during weight bearing, eventually leading to the development of arthritis, pain and lameness.

We are currently recommending early screening for hip joint laxity for dogs that will be greater than 50 lbs as adults. A new innovative surgery, called juvenile pubic symphysiodesis (JPS) is available that has the potential to limit or prevent arthritis caused by hip dysplasia.

Screening is performed at 12-16 weeks of age and consists of sedation followed by palpation of the hips for laxity (Ortolani testing). If the palpation is positive for joint laxity, this suggests a potential for future problems and JPS surgery would be recommended. The surgery must be performed by 4 months of age to be successful.

JPS surgery creates a focal area of fusion in the growth plate of the developing pelvis in young dogs. This allows for a specific alteration in the pelvis development with the ultimate result of the ball and socket fitting more "tightly," therefore, decreasing the potential amount of future hip arthritis.