

CAT OSTEOARTHRITIS PAIN CHECKLIST

Your Cat's Name: _____

Your Name: _____



Osteoarthritis pain can be a serious health problem for your cat. And cats hide almost everything, especially pain. You know your cat's playful ways and what she loves better than anyone. Changes in these behaviors could be signs of osteoarthritis pain. Your veterinarian relies on you to report changes in your cat's behavior for more accurate diagnoses. If it is found that your cat is showing signs of OA-related pain, helping your cat begins by talking to your vet.

COULD MY CAT HAVE OSTEOARTHRITIS?

This checklist will help your veterinary team identify your cat's activities and behaviors that might be signs of osteoarthritis (OA), a degenerative joint disease that can be painful.

Is your cat showing signs of OA-related pain?

Think about your cat's activity in the past week. Check all of the signs that you've observed in your cat.

JOINT DISEASE

Climbing up stairs: uses 'bunny-hop', with both back legs hopping at same time, and/or stops for a break

JOINT DISEASE

Climbing down stairs: angles body to the side, descends one stair at a time, and/or stops for a break

| HEALTHY | JOINT DISEASE |
|---|---|
|  |  |
| Chasing moving objects: slows down or takes breaks during play and/or may have thinner frame near the tail | |

| HEALTHY | JOINT DISEASE |
|---|---|
|  |  |
| Jumping up: hesitates before jumping up, doesn't clear jumps in one leap, and/or uses arms to pull the legs up | |

| JOINT DISEASE | |
|---|--|
|  | |
| Jumping down: hesitates before jumping down, makes smaller jumps vs. one big one and/or reaches down towards the ground instead of leaping | |

| HEALTHY | JOINT DISEASE |
|---|---|
|  |  |
| Running: moves at a slower speed and alternates between jogging & walking, and/or back feet angle together | |

If you checked any of these changes in behavior, your cat may have OA-associated pain.¹ Share these with your veterinarian healthcare team. They will fully evaluate your cat to confirm the diagnosis.

Osteoarthritis has physical and emotional effects

Just as in humans, chronic pain negatively impacts your cat's quality of life, not just physically, but also emotionally. The good news is that by identifying your cat's condition, you and your veterinarian can develop a treatment plan for your cat.

A recent peer-reviewed published study demonstrated the initial validity and reliability of a quality of life assessment for chronic diseases, such as osteoarthritis, in cats.² Using these questions, you can help your veterinarian assess and monitor how well your cat's chronic pain management treatment is working.



Think about your cat's behavior in the past week and help us determine a starting point by completing the following table.

| Is your cat... | ↓ My cat couldn't be less | | | | My cat couldn't be more ↓ | | | |
|--|---------------------------|---|---|---|---------------------------|---|---|--|
| Energetic & Enthusiastic (Vitality) | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | |
| Active & Comfortable (Comfort) | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | |
| Happy & Content (Emotional well-being) | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | |

YOUR CAT'S GENERAL BEHAVIOR HISTORY CAN BE HELPFUL

Additional information that can be helpful to your veterinary team is your cat's behavior.

| | YES | NO |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Has your cat's personality and sociability changed? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. Has your cat's urination or defecation habits changed? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. Is your cat hiding more or does your cat seem to be "slowing down"? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

OA pain can affect cats of any age, and it has been seen in more than 60% of cats that are 6 years or older.³ If left untreated, the pain can become worse over time. This checklist is designed to help with the recognition of OA pain to help keep your cat happy and active. Your veterinary team will review the results of this checklist with you to identify if your cat might be suffering from OA. This checklist is not a medical diagnostic tool and is not intended to replace discussion with an animal healthcare professional. Discuss medical concerns with your veterinarian.

References: **1.** Based on the Musculoskeletal Pain Screening Checklist (MiPSC) ©2019 North Carolina State University. **2.** Reid J., Nolan A.M., Scott E.M, Measuring pain in dogs and cats using structured behavioural observation, *Vet J.* 2018 June; 236: 72-79. **3.** Slingerland LI et al, Cross-sectional study of the prevalence and clinical features of osteoarthritis in 100 cats, *Vet J.* 2011 Mar;187(3):304-9.