



## VETERINARY VOICE: Tips of the Trade

### Surgery: Canine elbow dysplasia (CED) Part 2: Treatment options and prognosis

#### Treatment

Can be medical or surgical

#### 1. Medical treatment

- a. Chondroprotectants: Adequan, oral glucosamine, dietary supplements (omega 3 polyunsaturated fatty acid supplements)
  - i. Consider J/D diet as a source of Omega 3 PUFA's and glucosamine
  - ii. In general chondroprotectants are most effective before there is cartilage damage
- b. NSAIDS as needed for pain relief
- c. Opioids – Tramadol
- d. Ancillary non-opiate medications: Amantadine, Gabapentin
- e. Controlled activity
  - i. Maximizing controlled activity – leash walks, hiking, swimming
  - ii. Minimizing high impact activity – ball catching, frisbee, jumping, etc.
- f. Weight management: maintain body condition score of 5/9

#### 2. Surgical treatment

- a. Arthroscopy
  - i. Removal of fragmented coronoid process
  - ii. Debridement of OCD lesion of humeral condyle
- b. Ulnar osteotomy – if elbow incongruency is evident
- c. Sliding humeral osteotomy –if there are full thickness cartilage lesions diagnosed in the medial joint compartment at the time of arthroscopy
- d. If there is an ununited anconeal process (seen most commonly in German Shepherd dogs ) surgical removal of the process, lag screw fixation of the process or ulnar osteotomy depending on age of the patient and radiographic appearance of the process may be necessary

#### 3. Treatment options if advanced degenerative joint disease

- a. Total elbow replacement
- b. Stem cell therapy

#### Prognosis

In general, prognosis depends on the degree of arthritic change as well as the severity of the cartilage damage. Studies have shown that with or without treatment degenerative joint disease will progress. However, the severity of lameness can often be alleviated with medical and surgical treatment modalities. In general elbow dysplasia can vary in terms of clinical signs and diagnostic findings. In some cases, medical treatment is recommended over surgical treatment. The surgeons at VSCT will only make recommendations after they have completely examined the patient and reviewed the radiographs

#### Questions?

#### Surgical Experts:

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The Veterinary Specialty Center of Tucson has board-certified surgeons available for questions and consultations on surgical conditions during the weekdays. A member of the surgery team is on-call 24/7 to provide consultations to VSCT emergency doctors and to perform emergency surgery for patients seen by the VSCT emergency service. Board-certified surgeons have four additional years of training are certified by the American College of Veterinary Surgeons to assure competency in advanced veterinary surgery.