

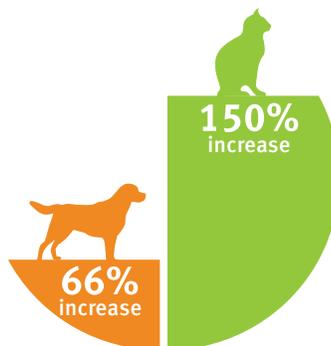
Osteoarthritis: When Age is *Not* to Blame

Banfield Pet Hospital®'s research team identified a growing population of pets at risk of developing osteoarthritis, a progressive and degenerative disease that can go undiagnosed, especially in the early stages.

What is OA?

Osteoarthritis (OA) is a form of arthritis caused by inflammation and damage to joint tissue, that can affect both dogs and cats. While OA is more common in older pets, it can develop in pets at *any* age.

OA is a chronic disease that will get worse over time, which can be very painful for pets and make it harder for them to get around comfortably.

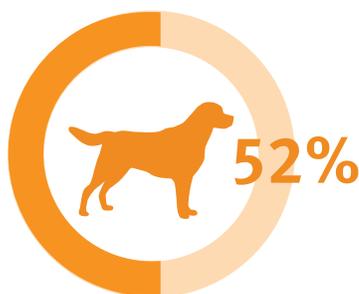


Unfortunately, OA has been on the rise over the past 10 years, with a 66% increase in dogs and 150% increase in cats.

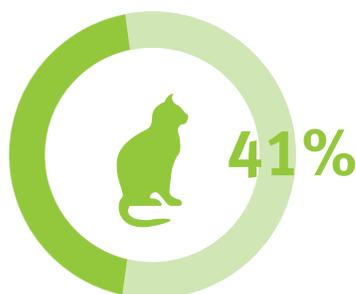
OA is a Heavy Issue

Did you know OA and excess weight are linked?

The percentage of overweight and obese pets has reached epidemic levels, and diseases commonly associated with excess weight – including OA – are on the rise.



of Dogs
with OA are also
overweight or obese



of Cats
with OA are also
overweight or obese

Joint discomfort from OA can keep pets from being active, which can lead to weight gain, which can then worsen the joint condition - a vicious cycle!



A Joint Effort

What you may think is normal “old age” behavior could actually be OA.*

Partner with your veterinarian to identify signs of OA. If OA is suspected, your veterinarian may recommend the following:

- Extended physical examination
- Diagnostic tests
- X-Rays
- Anti-inflammatory medications
- Electronic pet activity monitor
- Supplements
- Weight-management program that includes a combination of veterinary therapeutic diet and exercise

For more information, visit www.stateofpethealth.com

*(Flip over to see what to look for at home)



Decoding the Signs of Osteoarthritis

Pets can't speak for themselves or share their feelings of pain and discomfort – that's why cases of osteoarthritis (OA) can go undiagnosed. When monitoring for signs of OA in your pet, pay close attention to even small changes in behavior.



Dogs

Remember, what you think might just be normal "old age" behavior may actually be OA.



Sitting with a back leg loosely to the side



Decreased or loss of interest in play



Difficulty rising, stiffness or limping



Reluctance or inability to go up or down steps



Cats

Cats instinctively hide their pain, so detecting signs of OA can be more challenging.



Going to the bathroom just outside the litterbox



Inability to easily get onto and down from elevated objects like a table or cat tree



Poor hair coat, including signs of dandruff, mats or scruff