



OH, MY ACHING BACK

Reduce Sports-Related Injuries for Your Pet This Summer

By Peter H. Eeg, DVM
 National Veterinary Consultant
 for Invisible Fence® Brand

Summertime, and the living is easy – except if your pet overdoes it and suffers a pulled muscle, or worse, a dislocated hip. Yes, just like people, dogs can suffer muscle strains or more debilitating muscle, ligament or joint injuries if they're out of shape, too old or too young or not used to exercising much. As we make the transition from winter hibernation to more physically demanding summer events, our pets follow along. It is important for you and your pet to experience a slow, steady build-up of activity to avoid sports injuries.

Many people do not think that their pets can suffer significant injuries to their muscles, tendons, ligaments or joints. Sports-related injuries comprise a significant portion of quality-of-life-reducing events for your pet. The spring and summer months

produce the greatest concentration of these injuries because owners include their pets in a variety of sports-related activities.

The most common sports-related injuries occur when attempting a new activity, or when starting to exercise after not having done so for a time. The use of sports equipment such as balls, throwing disks, retrieval dummies, ropes or mechanical/motorized equipment can increase the potential for injury to your pet.

The most common sports-related injuries to the family pet include:

- Minor muscle or joint strains or sprains
- Back muscle spasms
- Toe nail injuries
- Tendon strains or sprains of the elbows, knees, ankles or wrists
- Tendon or ligament tears of the knees (the anterior cruciate ligament-ACL tear is the most common injury to the knee joint)
- Trauma to the hip joint capsule or round ligament of the hip
- Hip dislocation
- Knee cap dislocation
- Intervertebral disk bulging or herniation

All these potential injuries bring with them a host of secondary physiologic events, such as osteoarthritis formation, chronic nerve pain, stress, and behavior changes that can have additional negative long-term impact on the human-animal bond.

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There are a number of steps the activity-minded owner can take to reduce the potential for pet sports injuries. Most are common sense and require little or no additional cost or effort for the owner. They include:

- See your veterinarian for your pet's annual complete physical, including blood work and examination of the joints and muscles.
- Ask your veterinarian the ideal weight range for your pet and try to keep your pet within that range year-round.
- Discuss with your veterinarian the age appropriateness of a particular activity (this includes being too young or too old).
- Discuss with your veterinarian the maximum activity allowable for a particular sport.
- Observe your four-legged friend for any sudden activity changes or behavior changes during or after a sporting event.
- Do not go from full activity to no activity or vice versa at any time of the year.
- Plan ahead so that you know what you will be expecting from your pet during outdoor activity periods.
- Build up both your own activity and that of your pets to avoid over exertion.
- Be sure to think about what you will be asking your pet to do for or with you before you venture forward.
- Keep cool water available at all times.
- Talk with your veterinarian about having a first-aid kit.
- Do everything in moderation with your pet.



If your pet does become injured, it is important to call your veterinarian as soon as possible for a recommendation on what steps to take to minimize the damage. Never give any of your medication to your pet without first asking your veterinarian. Do not wait to see if things get better. The advent of a host of modern anti-inflammatory medications and proper post-injury treatment can reduce the "chronic re-injury cycle" for your pet.

By planning ahead, asking the right questions and thinking things through before beginning a new activity with your pet, you can have a fun, safe and pain-free summer with you and your four-legged friend. 🐾



By Karyn Garvin, Pet Behavior Specialist

Aggression in dogs is a serious problem. It is a concern in every community, as well as a life-threatening problem for the dog that exhibits this behavior. This article takes a look at how even the most wonderful family dog can learn to stalk people and other pets from their own home.

Often, it begins with a dog that suffers from boredom and has a wonderful picture window to look out for entertainment. It may begin when the owner is gone during the day and the dog lies waiting and looking out the window. Inevitably, a person or a dog may pass by and the dog does what comes naturally, it barks. As a matter of fact, it may bark very aggressively because it feels safe putting on a good show protected by the window.

It's a natural instinct for dogs to act protective; they find it very rewarding. Most owners understand this and aren't concerned until it becomes a big problem. The problem mounts with each passerby, as the dog becomes skilled at acting out its aggression. Day after day, one rehearsal after another, and we end up with a dog that has a conditioned response.

Everyone knows that there isn't a better way to create a mean dog than by chaining it. The same conditions exist here. First, there is

boredom, and second, there is a barrier frustration. The dog entertains itself by protecting its area. With repetition, it actually begins to see all passersby as annoying threats.

The solution lies in stopping repetitive, inappropriate behavior, as well as dealing with the cause. An Invisible Fence® Brand system gives you the ability to control your dog's behavior, both in your absence, as well as when you are home.



For example, you could place an Invisible Fence® Brand indoor system by the picture window when you're gone and the performance will quit.

To teach appropriate behavior, you want to socialize your dog and set limits. Obedience training and exercise are just a few ways you can reduce boredom in its life. And having an Invisible Fence® Brand product helps the dog set limits and makes it a friendlier companion, rather than an aggressive one. 🐾

Invisible Fence TIP

Dogs love water, so be sure to remove your pet's waterproof Invisible Fence® (and other)

Computer Collar® occasionally after he's been swimming or bathed. It'll help keep his neck dry and comfortable and prolong the life of the collar's material.



The Price of Bad Behavior

Invisible Fence® pet containment can help

Got a friend with a dog that is a menace to society? It may be worse than you think. Although the numbers vary depending on their source, it is safe to say that each year millions of pets are surrendered to our nation's shelters due to unwanted behavior. The sad side of this horror story is most of the behavior problems are correctable.

According to a recent survey published in *Veterinary Economics*, the average veterinary clinic loses 150 canine patients a year due to behavior disorders. In addition, behavior is the No. 1 reason for economic euthanasia. Pretty scary stuff, isn't it? With the pace at which we live our lives today, it is no wonder so many are surrendered. As a pack animal, our canine companions live for that daily family interaction;

yet too often, they are left alone in isolation, which frequently leads to behavior problems.

Recently, I received a letter from one of our new Invisible Fence® Brand customers, thanking us. She retold the story of how her family had tried to give their dog, Patches, away. Patches was a danger to others and herself – not coming when called, bolting out doors, and the final straw, pulling Christine (her owner) to the ground and dragging her across the yard. Right then and there, Christine vowed, "Patches was sooo out of here." As a last hope, they called us. Unbeknownst to Patches, she was only one more mistake away from losing her family.



By Dan Kelley, certified dog trainer and dealer, Invisible Fence of the (New York) Southern Tier

We were her last hope.

Invisible Fence dealers hear this and similar stories everyday. We provide solutions that go far beyond keeping the pet *safe @ home*. We create order and structure that strengthens the human/animal bond. Your

friend with the dog that is unruly needs your help. Tell them to contact the local Invisible Fence professionals, or better yet, call a local dealer yourself and tell them about your friend. Your friend will thank you, and more importantly, you may be saving his dog's life. According to Christine, "Patches is a totally different dog, she is happy and we're happy." 🐾

Featured Breed:



Shih-Tzu (pronounced Sheet-sue)

Breeding Group:

American Kennel Club (AKC)
Toy classed under the
Non-Sporting Dogs category

Description:

This small sturdy dog, like the Lhasa Apso, is covered over with an abundant double coat of long hair lined with a woolly undercoat. This proud-looking little dog has hair above the nose growing upward, creating a "chrysanthemum" face. The head is rounded, with a profuse beard and mustache, short hairy muzzle, and black nose (except in liver-colored dogs which have liver noses). The eyes are large, round and wide-set, dark on most dogs but lighter on liver and blue-colored dogs. The pendant ears are so covered with hair that they blend right into the body coat. The teeth should form a level or undershot bite. The topline is level and the body is slightly longer than the height at the withers. Dewclaw removal is optional. The heavily plumped tail is curled over the back. Any color is acceptable, though white on the forehead and tip of the tail is preferred by most dog show judges.

Origin: Documents and paintings dating from the 16th century show dogs resembling a small lion (which the Shih-Tzu is sometimes called). In the 17th century, dogs were brought from Tibet and bred in the forbidden City of Peking, probably by crossing the Tibetan Lhasa Apso and the native Pekingese. The Shih-Tzu became a favorite of the Imperial Chinese court. The breed was so revered that for many years after the Chinese began trading with the West, they refused to sell, or even give away, any of the little dogs. It was not until 1930 that the first pair was imported to England. The Shih-Tzu was recognized in Britain in 1946 and by the AKC in the United States in 1969. Today the breed is very popular, both as a companion and as a glamorous show dog.

Height: Up to 11 inches (28cm.)

Weight: 9-16 pounds (4-7kg.)

Temperament: Shih-Tzus are alert and spunky, little dogs, happy and hardy, endowed with loads of character. They are royally dignified, courageous and sometimes arrogant. This breed does well with polite, careful children. The gentle loyal Shih-Tzu makes friends easily and although obstinate can respond well to consistent patient training. A very alert watchdog, the Shih-Tzu likes to bark, but is usually quiet inside the house. They are stubborn and clever. Shih-Tzus can get snappish if they are surprised or peeved. Playful and lively, this affectionate little dog needs to be with people and is generally good with other pets. Some can be difficult to housebreak.

Exercise: The Shih-Tzu is a naturally active dog, but if it is allowed, it will lay around in its favorite spots. They should be encouraged to get out and about to stay fit. Daily walks are a good idea. Do not over feed this breed or it will quickly become fat.

Grooming: These little dogs require a good daily grooming using a bristle brush. A topknot is usually tied with a bow so that the dog can see properly. Some owners prefer to have them trimmed to make the coat easier and less time consuming to care for. Keep the ear passages and area around the eyes clean. Shih-Tzus have sensitive eyes that should be kept clean. There are special drops you can buy to put in them if needed. Ask your vet what to use on your dog. This breed sheds little to no hair and is good for allergy sufferers if their coats are kept very well groomed.

Possible Health Concerns: They tend to wheeze and snore. Some bloodlines are prone to ear, eye and respiratory problems. Spinal disc disease caused by a long back and short legs may be a problem. Their teeth need regular veterinary attention, as they tend to be lost early. These dogs gain weight easily and should not be overfed.

Life Expectancy: About 15 years or more. 🐾



Your Dog Safe at Home:



Keep These Tips in Mind When *Flying* With Your Pet

Summer is a time for vacations, and many folks like to take their pets with them. If you're flying, consider these tips for a safe flight:

SMALL PETS. If your pet is small enough to fit in a carrier, which goes beneath your seat, this is your best bet for a safe, worry-free trip. Most major airlines still accept one pet per cabin, at an average cost of \$50. Make a reservation well in advance, as only one or two pets per flight are allowed.

LARGER PETS. Larger pets must be sent as "cargo." On the major airlines, this section is fully pressurized and heated. The cost runs from \$50 to \$500, so check with your airline's baggage department. Some additional tips include:

- Choose a direct flight. If you must change flights, be sure you can collect and then re-check your dog at the layover airport. Give yourself a long enough layover to take your pet for a walk.
- In the summer, travel early or late in the day to avoid heat; in winter, travel mid-day to avoid severe cold. This has nothing to do with the temperature in the cargo compartment, which is pressurized and kept between 50°F - 70°F (12°C - 20°C) degrees by law, but with the temperature in exposed loading areas.
- Make sure your dog's collar and ID tags are sturdy.



- Make sure you are carrying a veterinarian certificate showing that your pet is in good health and her shots are current. The certificate should not have been issued more than 14 days before departure.

For more tips on airline travel with your pet, visit the following Web sites:
www.petsonthego.com,
www.companionair.com
 or www.tripswithpets.com. 