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Arthroscopy: We'll Show You Around the Joint

Most of us dog lovers/owners have heard about anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) tears, elbow dysplasia, and osteochondritis dissecans (OCD) affecting the elbow, shoulder, stifle and hock joints. What do all of these problems have in common?

They are frequently encountered canine orthopedic problems, involve joints, and patients with these common problems can benefit from the diagnostic and therapeutic advancements in veterinary arthroscopy.



What exactly is arthroscopy, you ask? Arthroscopy is a surgical technique used to visualize, diagnose, and treat intra-articular (inside a joint) problems. The word comes from two Greek words, "arthro" (joint) and "skopein" (to look). The term literally means, "to look within the joint." In an arthroscopic procedure, a small nick is made in the skin and an instrument that is half pencil-sized that contains a small lens and lighting system to magnify and illuminate the structures is inserted into the joint. Light is transmitted through fiber optics to the end of the arthroscope, and a miniature television camera connected to a monitor enables the surgeon to see the interior of the joint through a very small incision, rather than an open surgical approach.

Arthroscopy has revolutionized the way we diagnose and treat many joint injuries and disorders. At Colorado Canine Orthopedics, we have been performing arthroscopic procedures for about a decade.

Over the past 10 years, technological advancements in arthroscopic equipment have resulted in a clearer, crisper, and brighter picture. Accurate color reproduction and greater depth of field have enhanced the surgeon's ability to view intra-articular structures accurately. Scopes and cameras have become more compact, more ergonomic, and easier to handle. Newer technology has also allowed intraoperative still and video photography. At Colorado Canine Orthopedics we archive an intra-articular video of all patients undergoing an arthroscopic procedure. If a patient ever has an additional problem within the joint, we have an accurate video record for comparison.

In most cases, arthroscopy is used as a diagnostic tool as well as a treatment modality. The most common uses in canine patients involve juvenile bone diseases and ligament injuries in the stifle (knee) and glenohumeral (shoulder) joints. Arthroscopy is minimally invasive and allows for more thorough, as well as magnified, inspection of the joint. Diagnoses can be made that would otherwise be missed by the naked eye (open arthrotomy). For example, we can diagnose early partial ACL tears that precede the development of osteoarthritis. These patients can experience moderate to severe lameness with only a small partial tear that was all but impossible to identify prior to advancements in arthroscopic equipment and skills. In fact, arthroscopy is so accurate, expensive diagnostic imaging techniques such as MRI can be avoided in some instances.

Once a diagnosis is made, many conditions can be treated arthroscopically. By avoiding open-surgery, post-operative discomfort is minimized, recovery is significantly quicker, and hospitalization is shorter. While arthroscopy is not inexpensive, quicker recovery, shorter hospitalization, and avoidance of redundant diagnostic imaging techniques may actually reduce overall costs.

The surgeons at Colorado Canine Orthopedics have performed thousands of arthroscopic procedures. If your pet has a joint disorder such as an ACL tear, arthroscopy should play an important role in the diagnosis and treatment of the problem. With today's technology and available veterinary specialists, virtually no canine joint should undergo an open exploration. Examples of video and still arthroscopic images can be found on our website at www.CanineOrtho.com.



IN SEARCH OF CINNAMON Against Fleas, Flies, Ticks and Mosquitos

Solid Gold researches the ingredients that go into its products very carefully. The owner, Sissy Harrington-McGill, recently went to India to study ayurvedic herbs. The biscuit treat, Solid Gold's Cinnabone Biscuit for dogs, was of a special interest.

Sissy has been breeding, showing and raising Great Danes for almost 50 years. Her dogs are fed at 6am and at 6pm. We all go to bed at around 10pm. If she forgets to give them their night-time biscuit, around 2am, a very loud yawn is heard saying, "I'm starving to death. Feed me my biscuits."

Then, they go back to sleep through the night. Their people are well trained!

Of all the five biscuit recipes, Cinnabone Biscuit is the all-time favorite. South East Asia is known for its cinnamon. Nothing is too good for our fur kids.

Cinnamon information first appeared in Chinese writings around 2800 B.C. It was given to people for a variety of ailments. It helped with kidney, liver, and heart problems. It was used to keep meat from spoiling and kept disease from spreading due to its anti-bacterial properties.

In the first century A.D., Pliny, the Elder, thought that cinnamon was so valuable that 350 grams of cinnamon were equal to 15 times the value of silver.

Medieval physicians used it for respiratory problems such as coughing and sore throats. They didn't know how effective it was for bacterial infections. They just knew that I worked.

Cinnamon was thought to have an anti-aging use, since it slows down the deterioration of cells.

Today, cinnamon is used for weight control and Type II diabetes. The Bellville Nutrition Center is under the auspices of the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture. Their 2003 study found that cinnamon lowered glucose, triglyceride, LDL cholesterol as well as improved diabetes problems.

The department also found that it helped with insect problems. As an additional bonus, the department found that even after the experiment was over, all the beneficial effects continued for 20 more days.

A professor of nutrition at the Public School of Nutrition at the Harvard School of Public Health was amazed at the long lasting results. Dr. Anderson of the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture said, "Cinnamon makes cells more sensitive to insulin."

Cinnamon contains sulphur, the seventh most prevalent substance in the human's and dog's bodies. Dogs love cinnamon. Fleas, ticks, flies and mosquitoes hate sulphur.

In 2004, the island of Taiwan found that if they sprinkled cinnamon around the island, it killed mosquitoes larva more effectively than DEET, a common pesticide. On July 14, 2004 a recommendation was made from the Agriculture and Food Chemistry Dept. in Taiwan to use cinnamon to repel insects. Yet, if the dogs found the cinnamon and ate it, it wouldn't hurt them. Dogs love cinnamon.

From Sissy's notebook about India in the spring of 2008, she tells what she observed.

"The elephants and camels are common beasts of burden in the city of Bombay (now called Mumbai). They poop all over as they walk along. The sacred white cows stop traffic and walk into the street, into shops-pooing all the way. Traffic comes to a dead stop as the cows wander across the streets.

At night, women come out and gather up the poop, mix it with straw, dry it out, and use it for fuel for cooking.

In the early 1800's in the U.S., pioneers also collected Buffalo Chips and Cow Pies for the same reason.

The chips were so valuable that they were shipped to various ports as cargo. At first, they were stored into the bottom of the ship's hold. But they produced methane gas. So, if someone approached the chips with a lighted lantern, it exploded.

So sailors marked on the ship's walls STORE HIGH IN TRANSIT to let the air circulate. Later on, the abbreviation S.H.I.T. was used.

I always thought that expression was used by dog handlers as they left the ring, if they didn't win.

Solid Gold Cinnabone Biscuits are available in 2.5 pound reusable buckets with handles, or 1 pound jars. The other ingredients are barley, lamb, oats, fish, and garlic and sea vegetation.

Our other biscuits are Dragon's Teeth to clean teeth, Dragonett to clean little teeth, Dyna-Bones for the eyes and diabetes and Natur-Bone Biscuit for memory, circulation and weight control.



Solid Gold is the only dog food company that is a member of the Organic Trade Association, the American Nutraaceutical Association, the Medicinal Food Association, Nutraaceutical Foods Association and the Life Extension Association.



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