

Introducing PennHIP

What is it?

A new way of assessing the risk of hip dysplasia (poorly shaped hips) in dogs. It involves taking x-rays of your pet's hips using a special positioning device under anaesthesia. The x-rays are sent to a team of vets in America to be assessed. PennHip is replacing the current New Zealand hip dysplasia scheme as the results with PennHIP are more reliable. Dogs as young as 16 weeks can be assessed for hip dysplasia with PennHIP. With the old scheme dogs needed to be 12 months of age or older. PennHIP is only available through accredited vets. Lisa Stuart at the Kennington clinic has recently become accredited.

Labradors on a restricted diet developed hip dysplasia much later - and they got it less severely. So there you go. No excuse. Keep your dog lean and it will not only be with you for longer, it will lead a more athletic, more pain-free life.



Why should my dog undergo PennHIP?

Hip dysplasia is common in large breed dogs. If you intend to breed from your dog it is good to find out whether it is likely to pass on undesirable characteristics which will lead to arthritis in its puppies later in life. This is part of being a responsible dog breeder. Also it is helpful to know if your dog has unhealthy shaped hips early on as this gives you a head start in acting to delay the onset of arthritis. There are a number of ways to delay the onset and reduce the severity of arthritis including weight control to maintain a lean body condition, feeding an ideal diet, providing joint supplements and restricting heavy exercise during the first 12-18 months of life while your pet is growing.

Nestle Purina did a study where they took sets of puppies from 24 different litters and fed one puppy normal rations and the other a $\frac{3}{4}$ ration. The study showed that Labradors that are kept lean live on average 2 years longer, develop hip dysplasia much later on and got it less severely than those who are fed normal amounts. The gap between overweight Labradors and lean Labradors is likely to be even larger.

How do I book my dog in for PennHIP?

Please contact the Kennington clinic to make an appointment for your dog. You will have a 15 minute morning consult before your dog is admitted so the PennHIP protocol can be thoroughly explained, some paperwork filled out and any questions answered. Your dog will receive sedation so withholding food from 8pm the evening before arriving at the clinic is necessary. Your pet will need to be at the clinic between 8-9am and will be ready to go home in the afternoon. We can tie this in with de-sexing if desired. Since the x rays are analysed in America the results take a few weeks to come back.

To find out more give us a ring or have a look at www.pennhip.org

After Hours Service

All veterinary clinics need to provide their clients with 24 hour service by law. This is to ensure animals are able to be cared for if an emergency arises outside normal clinic hours. If you find your pet is injured or sick in the weekend or in the evenings then please call the clinic number 03 230 4689 (Kennington) or 03 206 6170 (Edendale) and you will be diverted to the after hours cell phone. As we cover both the Edendale and Kennington clinic and both large and small animals after hours the vet may already be attending another emergency when you call. Please leave a message with your name and phone number if the phone is not answered. After hours fees apply to all call outs.



When to desex your pet

There is recent research to say cats and small breed dogs can be safely desexed from 4-6 months onwards. Large breed dogs may benefit from waiting until they are 6-12 months of age to reduce the incidence of orthopaedic conditions. As discussed in the PennHIP article, additional factors that increase the incidence of hip dysplasia and other orthopaedic problems include obesity, too much exercise as a young dog and a poor diet. Female dogs will come on heat between 6-12 months of age depending on breed so it is important to watch out for this if they are not already desexed to ensure they are not mated. The longer a male dog is under the influence of testosterone the less effective castration will be in toning down his 'male' behaviour. Please discuss the appropriate time to desex your pet with our vets, as individual animals will have individual recommendations

Parvo again....

We have had an 'awful' Parvo case lately in a 7 month old dog who had only received one puppy vaccination at 6 weeks of age. After a week in hospital and intensive care the dog eventually recovered but was very unwell with vomiting and horrific diarrhoea for a number of days before things turned around. This case illustrates the importance of booster vaccinations. The most important thing about puppy vaccination is that the final vaccine needs to be done at 14-16 weeks of age. One vaccine at a younger age does not provide adequate protection. If you have recently acquired a puppy, check its vaccine book to see when the next booster vaccine is due. If you did not receive a vaccine book with your new puppy, assume it is unvaccinated and book the puppy in for its shots.

Some interesting statistics

- There are approximately five million companion animals in New Zealand, outnumbering humans.
- 68% of New Zealand households owns a companion animal, a higher percentage than in any comparable country.
- New Zealanders are the worlds greatest cat owners, with total feline population of 1.419 million.
- New Zealand has a total canine population of approximately 700,000.
- Around 10% of New Zealand households own 1.678 million fish.
- 5% of cat owners, 8% of dog owners and 13% of horse or pony owners have insurance cover for their companion animal.
- When asked what role companion animals play in their households, 83% of cat owners, 77% of dog owners and 53% of rabbit owners say they're considered as members of the family.
- Around 6% of New Zealand households own approximately five birds each.



A Survey published by the NZ Companion Animal Council Inc. (July 2011)



KENNINGTON CLINIC 11 CLAPHAM ROAD (03) 230 4689
EDENDALE CLINIC 14 SWEENEY STREET (03) 206 6170

