



OSTEOARTHRITIS

Osteoarthritis, commonly referred to as arthritis, is a common cause of urine scalding, underlying pain or general lethargy in some older animals. It is more commonly seen in elderly rabbits and guinea pigs older than 5-6 years of age but may show up as early as 3 years of age.

Arthritis can be a problem even when your rabbit or guinea pig appears to be moving well. They often very successfully hide mobility problems and in some cases it is not until we treat this condition that we can rule it out.

DIAGNOSIS:

X-rays of the back and legs are usually recommended as they may indicate joint changes. In some cases a CT provides more information about the joint and can help to diagnose subtle osteoarthritis.

We also often trial an oral pain relief, and cartrophen injections to help increase joint mobility.

If these treatments are successful we can use oral pain relief intermittently throughout their life. If meloxicam (anti-inflammatory medication) is used for pain relief long term, regular blood testing is advised as this medication can put pressure on the kidneys.

INFORMATION ON CARTROPHEN

Cartrophen helps treat, manage and prevent arthritis. Cartrophen works in the following ways:

- * Stimulates cartilage producing cells to produce new cartilage
- * Slows cartilage destruction from enzymes produced in inflammation
- * Stimulates synovial cells to produce lubricating joint fluid
- * Helps prevent inflammation
- * Improves blood flow and nutrition to joint tissues

Cartrophen is generally initially given as a course of 4 injections - one injection once a week for 4 weeks. After this, the injection is repeated approximately every 1-3 months for the average rabbit. In many cases we can train you how to give the injections so you can do them at home.

If you have a middle-aged or older rabbit or guinea pig, or are at all concerned about your pet then please get in touch with us.

