

# **HIP DYSPLASIA**

**Hip Dysplasia** is a major problem in the large breeds of dogs. It is the result of birth defects and growing deformities of the pelvis and hip joints. It is inherited. The “ball and socket” of the hip joint fit poorly causing abnormal movement of the involved legs and pain.

**Early signs include lameness in one or both of the rear legs, reluctance or difficulty in getting up after lying down, reluctance to run and/or jump, and sometimes a swaying appearance to the rear legs when viewed from behind.**

**Signs vary considerably. The dog may show no signs, even though severe hip lesions are present, or it can be totally crippled and disabled by the condition.**

**Signs usually are not detected in the newborn puppy, but often appear during the period of rapid growth before one year of age.**

**DIAGNOSIS** is by x-ray examination. Sedation is usually necessary to restrain the dog for proper film exposure. A dog **CANNOT** be confirmed “free” of dysplasia until two years of age, due to the changes that may occur in the pelvis during any stage of the growth process.

**UNFORTUNATELY**, there is **NO** way to predict how it will develop in each individual or how severe the signs will be.

**Since the disease is hereditary, affected dogs should NOT be used for breeding.**

We recommend x-rays of **BOTH** male and female dogs used for breeding. A certification program is available (OFA - Orthopedic Foundation for Animals), however, we feel that our radiography standards are sufficient for most dogs. Dogs should be at least 1 1/2 years of age for x-rays to be accurate.

**TREATMENT** may consist of the following:

- 1. Medications for pain and stiffness.**
- 2. Surgical removal of the hip joint allowing a “false” joint to form.**
- 3. Artificial Hip Transplantation.**
- 4. Maintenance of proper weight, diet, and exercise. The pet must not be allowed to become overweight.**
- 5. Medications to increase the joint fluid that lubricates the joint surfaces.**

**THERE IS NO CURE FOR HIP DYSPLASIA!!**