

Intro to Canine Rehabilitation

by Carolyn McIntyre, PT

If you're reading this article, you're a dog lover. You love playing with your dog, hugging your dog, training your dog, and just simply sharing in each other's company. As a dog owner, your dog's health and wellness is paramount. You want your dog to move well, age with ease, enjoy life without pain and discomfort and avoid illness. That's why it's important that we start thinking about how we can use simple preventative strategies, such as conditioning programs and wellness checks with a health professional to keep our dogs in optimal condition. In addition to ensuring our dogs stay fit and happy, a wellness assessment with a physiotherapist can help to identify early injuries, muscle imbalances, joint dysfunctions and evaluate potential risk factors your dog may have for certain injuries or conditions.

Canine rehabilitation is an emerging field based on the same principles as physiotherapy for humans, which are to restore, maintain, and maximize strength, function, movement, and overall wellbeing. There is a heavy emphasis on examination, evaluation, diagnosis, and physical interventions. As a canine rehabilitation professional, I design individually tailored treatment plans for each dog. These can include a home exercise stretching and strengthening programs for clients in combination with the use of laser, joint mobilizations, and myofascial release to help improve circulation, restore motor patterns, and decrease pain. Canine rehabilitation includes two main branches:

1. **Physical rehabilitation:** This is the branch that addresses issues that have already occurred, such as acute or chronic injuries or other ongoing physical limitations (e.g., hip osteoarthritis, shoulder OCD).
2. **Fitness and wellness:** This branch strives to be proactive by preventing injuries before they happen, as well as to enhance the performance of an otherwise healthy dog (e.g., performance dogs looking for that "edge").



A dog's life is full of risks of injury - jumping off furniture, sprinting after squirrels, playing rough with their friends, or participating in performance sports. Minimize those risks by investing in some preventative fitness, and your dog will thank you for it.

About McIntyre Canine Rehabilitation

Carolyn is uniquely qualified with a Master of Science in Physiotherapy and advanced training in Canine Rehabilitation. McIntyre Canine Rehabilitation is a mobile Canine Rehab Company from Guelph, ON with a passion for injury prevention and canine conditioning. Services include: canine conditioning workshops and seminars; one on one sessions for fitness evaluations (to prevent injuries) and physical rehabilitation (to recover from injuries, surgery, or illness), including Skype services; canine conditioning group classes, and distributor for therapeutic dog coats and crate liners.

To find out more, visit our website (<http://www.mcrehabilitation.com>), Facebook page (McIntyre Canine Rehabilitation) or e-mail us at cmcintyre9@gmail.com



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