

Panosteitis

Panosteitis is a spontaneously occurring lameness that usually occurs in large breed dogs. German Shepherds seems to be particularly predisposed to this condition. Due to this, it is possible that the disease may have genetic causes. Some veterinarians feel that this disease may be induced or worsened by stress.

Affected dogs are usually in the 5 to 14 month age range and male dogs are more commonly infected than female dogs. The disease has been reported in dogs as young as 2 months and can occur in young mature dogs. The lameness tends to occur very suddenly, usually without a history of trauma or excessive exercise. In most cases one or the other front leg is affected first and then the problem tends to move around, making it appear that the lameness is shifting from leg to leg. There are often periods of improvement and worsening of the symptoms in a cyclic manner. This makes evaluation of treatment difficult since many dogs will spontaneously recover with or without treatment and then relapse.

X-rays usually reveal that the bones have greater density than is normally found. If pressure is applied over the long bones, pain is usually present. The X-ray signs do not always match the clinical signs.

In most cases, the worst pain lasts between one and two months but may persist in a cyclic nature for up to a year. Analgesic medications like aspirin can be helpful. In severe cases, corticosteroids may provide relief.

This condition is self limiting, meaning that it will eventually go away, with or without treatment. Pain control can go a long way towards helping your pet feel more comfortable and should be used, though.

This information has been compiled by the Southeastern Newfoundland Club, as part of their comprehensive rescue program. We are grateful for their generosity in sharing all of their hard work.- NCA 2006