

# ANIMAL HOSPITAL OF LANESVILLE

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## **Knee Problems in Dogs**

By Dr. Rene Wingerter

Unfortunately, it seems many dogs are plagued with knee trouble. There are two main problems we see – luxating patellas and anterior cruciate ruptures.

A luxating patella is sometimes called a “trick knee”. It is when the kneecap pops out of place. This makes it hard for the dog to bend the knee and can be very painful. You will sometimes see your pet running along and then suddenly hold the back leg out stiff and then limp for a while. Usually the knee will pop back in place but if left untreated arthritis or ligament injury can develop. Many severe cases benefit from surgery to deepen the groove where the patella or kneecap rests and to tighten the joint.

Another problem – ACR or Anterior Cruciate Rupture is often seen in very active or over weight dogs. Just like when a football player “blows a knee” so can a large active dog. Even a less active dog can hurt the cruciate ligament if she is over weight and runs and turns suddenly. This usually is a sudden occurrence when the pet is playing in the yard and suddenly yelps in pain. She will limp on the leg for a long time. In fact, the limping may improve but never really goes away. Left untreated severe arthritis will usually develop. If your pet “blows a knee” they will most likely need major joint surgery to replace the torn ligament.

It is best to have your pet checked out as a puppy and then yearly to see if there is a problem with a “trick knee”. Anytime your pet limps even mildly for more than 24 hours, he should be checked out. If caught early these problems can be corrected before irreversible arthritis occurs.

If you have any questions please call us at the Animal Hospital of Lanesville at 952-3643.