

# How to Prevent Hip Dysplasia in Your New Puppy

## **1. Only buy a puppy from health tested parents.**

Please see this article on how to find a reputable breeder:

[www.clairedvm.com/finding\\_reputable\\_breeder.pdf](http://www.clairedvm.com/finding_reputable_breeder.pdf)

Buying from health tested parents (e.g. hips certified as normal through OFA or PennHIP) doesn't completely eliminate all risk, but it significantly decreases the risk.

Breeding OFA Excellent to OFA Excellent results in a 3% incidence of hip dysplasia. Breeding two dysplastic dogs together results in a 30-65% incidence of hip dysplasia depending on the severity of the parents. Buying puppies from parents without hip scores is like playing Russian Roulette -- are you getting a pup with a 97% chance of normal hips or a pup with a 35% chance of normal hips?

Source: Table 1 on page 8. <https://www.ofa.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/OFA-2018-The-Use-of-Health-Databases-and-Selective-Breeding-.pdf>

## **2. Keep your puppy lean.**

A growing puppy should be kept in a 4/9 to 5/9 on the Purina Body Condition Score chart, which can be found here: <https://www.morrisanimalfoundation.org/sites/default/files/filesync/Purina-Body-Condition-System.pdf>

## **3. Feed your puppy appropriately.**

Make sure you feed an appropriate diet to your growing puppy -- eg if you have a puppy expected to be over 50lbs at maturity, it should be on a large breed puppy food, or some all life stages foods (eg Purina Proplan Sport 30/20) are also OK for growth of large breed puppies (eg retrievers). If you have a giant breed puppy then it should be on a giant breed puppy food. These large and giant breed puppy foods are designed with a correct calcium and phosphorus content for slow growth.

Information about picking an appropriate diet for large breed puppies:

- <https://vetnutrition.tufts.edu/2017/02/confused-about-what-to-feed-your-large-breed-puppy-new-rules-may-help>
- <https://veterinarypartner.vin.com/default.aspx?pid=19239&id=5985068>

Feed a food from a manufacturer who controls the product all the way from acquisition to packaging, owns the plants where it is manufactured, who does feeding trials, who has nutritionists on staff, and who provides the ingredient info. These are considered WASVA compliant diets. Current brands that meet this criteria are (in no particular order):

Hills/Science Diet  
Purina  
Iams  
Eukanuba  
Royal Canin

You can check other brands to see if they meet this criteria (or even answered the questions) at:  
<https://petnutritionalliance.org/chart/index.php/manufacture-report>

Do not feed your growing puppy a homemade diet. If you have your heart set on cooking for your dog, please wait until after 12 months of age (when he's finished growing up) to start that.

#### **4. Exercise your puppy appropriately.**

Good muscle mass helps hold the femoral head tight in the hip socket. Swimming is excellent exercise regardless of age. Do not jog/run on hard surfaces with your pup until at least a year of age.

#### **5. Get OFA or PennHIP radiographs taken of your puppy to determine his/her risk for development of hip dysplasia.**

Locate a PennHIP veterinarian: <https://antechimaging.com/antechweb/locate-a-pennhip-veterinarian>

Any general practice veterinarian can take OFA radiographs. Ask their experience/comfort level with OFA radiographs as some of us are really good at them, and some are... not. Poor positioning will absolutely affect the results.

The importance of good positioning:

<https://doghipxray.com/studies/XrayPositioningOFAHipDysplasiaGrading.pdf>

Both PennHIP and OFA will evaluate radiographs by mixed breed, unregistered dogs as well as purebred, registered dogs. ALWAYS submit radiographs to OFA and/or PennHIP for an official diagnosis by board-certified radiologists. It's about \$30, so there's no reason not to submit them.

#### **6. If your puppy is diagnosed with hip dysplasia, discuss your options with your veterinarian.**

Depending on the severity, options may include:

- Surgical treatment -
  - Total hip replacement - <https://vhc.missouri.edu/small-animal-hospital/surgery/canine-total-hip-replacement/>
  - Femoral head osteotomy (FHO) - <https://veterinarypartner.vin.com/default.aspx?pid=19239&id=6378312>
  - Comparison of the procedures: <https://www.globalvetspecialists.org/comparison-thr-fho>
- Medical treatment -
  - Glucosamine supplements (Dasuquin, Cosequin, Phycos)
    - Dasuquin - <http://www.dasuquin.com/dasuquin-advanced-soft-chews/>
  - Joint specific food (e.g. Hills J/D)
  - Injectable medications to protect cartilage
    - Adaquan - <https://www.adequancanine.com/>
  - Pain medications/antiinflammatories (Rimadyl, Meloxicam, Galliprant, Amantadine, and Gabapentin among others).

And of course, keeping your dog lean will decrease the amount of weight that his/her joints have to carry, which will help keep him/her comfortable for as long as possible.

If your dog is not diagnosed with hip dysplasia, then there's really no need to supplement him/her or give Adaquan or anything else. The only exception might be an upper level performance dog in a high-impact sport. If your dog fits that criteria -- talk to a sports medicine veterinarian. If your dog is just an active pet, there's no need to give anything beyond a high quality diet.

Want to know more? Radiographs of dysplastic hips and more information on hip dysplasia can be found at the OFA or PennHIP websites.

OFA website: <https://www.ofa.org/diseases/hip-dysplasia>

PennHIP website: <https://antechimagingservices.com/antechweb/pennhip>

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