

Children's Resources: Sports Medicine & Rehabilitation

AMC
SINCE 1910

Schwarzman
Animal Medical Center
Usdan Institute for
Animal Health Education



Veterinary Specialty of the Day:

Sports Medicine & Rehabilitation

Some veterinarians and veterinary technicians undergo further training to specialize in a specific field of medicine. Veterinarians who specialize in Sports Medicine & Rehabilitation focus on an animal's recovery after surgery and on improving the quality of life for animals suffering from debilitating injuries or chronic illness through treatment, therapy, and pain management.

Discussion Question

- Have you ever had to recover from an injury? What helped you improve your recovery?

Rehabilitation veterinarians are trained to...



Prescribe Treatment Programs

Rehabilitation veterinarians work with pet owners in managing treatment programs designed to meet a pet's individual needs.



Offer Rehabilitative Therapies

Rehabilitation veterinarians are trained to offer various types of therapy designed to improve mobility, increase strength, and decrease pain.



Help Animals Recover After Surgery or an Injury

The treatment programs given by the veterinarians can help a pet recover after surgery or an injury through a variety of rehabilitative therapies.



Support Animals Needing Assistive Devices

Some animals need an assistive device, such as a splint, brace, or even a prosthetic limb, to support an injured body part, correct a deformity, or encourage the use of a limb.

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Types of Rehabilitation Treatment

Exercise



Exercise can help an animal increase their strength, lower their weight, and lead to greater mobility.

Ultrasound Therapy



Ultrasound therapy uses sound waves to reduce pain, increase circulation, and improve how joints function.

Massage



Massage can help increase circulation and control pain in an animal. As a bonus, it also promotes relaxation!

Laser Therapy



Laser therapy uses light to reduce pain and to help tissues repair.

Manual Therapy



Manual therapy includes a variety of techniques where the vet moves a limb or joint to increase mobility and relieve pain.

Regenerative Medicine



Regenerative medicine helps heal injuries by using an animal's own stem cells or plasma at the site of an injury.

Hydrotherapy



Hydrotherapy uses water (i.e. an underwater treadmill, a pool, etc.) to relieve pain and provide low-impact exercise.

Acupuncture



Acupuncture is the practice of placing needles in specific points on an animal. This can help relieve pain and improve circulation.

References:

<https://www.amcny.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Benefits-of-Rehabilitation.pdf>

<https://rehabvets.org/rehab-therapies.lasso>

Activities



5th Grade & Up

Cat & Dog Exercises

Materials: treats, pet toys, yoga mat

- Physical activity such as exercise is important for keeping pets healthy! If your family has a cat or a dog, there are plenty of different exercises you and your child can do with your pet at home. Help your child come up with an exercise plan for the family pet using the helpful resources below:
- Dog Exercises
 - Let your child come with you when walking your dog. If they are old enough, have them hold the leash while you walk together.
 - Refer to our Dog Fitness poster:
https://www.amcny.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/2012dog_exercise_poster.pdf
 - Check out our video on Strengthening Exercises for Your Dog:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W1Pgu0sGB6s>
- Cat Exercises
 - Teach your child how to play with the cat at home using cat toys such as a feather wand or laser pointer.
 - Refer to our Cat Fitness poster:
<https://www.amcny.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Exercise-CAT-Poster-2011r.pdf>
- No family pet? No problem! It's equally as important for children to stay active as well. Playing a sport, taking a dance break, learning a cool new yoga pose, or even going for a nice walk outdoors are all excellent ideas for physical activity! Allow them to plan out what physical activities they'd like to do and join in on the fun if you can.

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Activities



9th - 12th Grades

Career Exploration: Veterinary Sports Medicine & Rehabilitation

Materials: computer/tablet/phone with internet access

- The field of veterinary medicine is huge and there are many job opportunities available to those interested in pursuing a career in the field.
- If your child is interested in a career in veterinary rehabilitation, encourage them to research the various job opportunities and programs that exist.
- Need a place to start? Check out this link to the American Association of Rehabilitation Veterinarians: <https://rehabvets.org/what-is-rehab.lasso>