

Intervertebral Disc Disease (IVDD)

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What is IVDD?

- A disorder in which the intervertebral discs bulge, compressing the spinal cord
- In a healthy animal, intervertebral discs function as a cushion, absorbing movements
- Disc anatomy:

Nucleus pulposus: Inner, semifluid layer

Annulus fibrosis: Outer, fibrous tissue layer



Types of IVDD

- Hansen's Type I Disc Disease
Nucleus pulposus becomes calcified -> annulus tears -> nucleus extrudes -> acute compression
- Hansen's Type II Disc Disease
Nucleus pulposus becomes fibrocartilaginous -> annulus stays intact -> nucleus material gradually protrudes -> chronic compression



How can my veterinarian help?

- Perform physical and neurologic exam +/- imaging diagnostics to confirm IVDD
- Prescribe steroids and anti-inflammatories to alleviate pain and swelling
- Perform surgery in more severe cases
- Educate you to properly monitor and manage your pet at home as appropriate

What causes IVDD?



- Obesity
- Genetic predisposition
- Old age
- Lifestyle
 - Excessive forceful impacts from jumping, for example

Canna-Pet. Intervertebral Disc Disease (IVDD) in dogs. 25 Jan. 2017

What signs indicate IVDD?

- Symptoms range from mild pain to paralysis
- Some include:
 - Pain and weakness in hind limbs
 - Hunched or tensed posture
 - Sensitivity to touch or movement
 - Loss of bowel/bladder control
 - Limb paralysis

IVDD grading scale

- Grade 1 – painful, but able to walk
- Grade 2 – still able to walk, but notably weak in hind limbs
- Grade 3 – unable to walk, but still able to move hind limbs and tail
- Grade 4 – unable to walk or control movement of hind limbs and tail
- Grade 5 – unable to move or feel hind limbs