



Interesting Case from our web site www.fairfield-vets.co.uk



"Erin" - Pyrenean Mountain Dog with Osteochondrosis



Erin

Osteochondrosis or OCD is a disease of cartilage that has been identified in a wide number of species including chickens, pigs, horses, humans and dogs.

The incidence of osteochondrosis is very high in domestic pigs which are bred for particular characteristics. In contrast it is absent in wild pigs.

It is a disease which only affects growing individuals or adolescents.

This condition affects the cartilage development that occurs at the end of long bones within the joints. As a result of a failing blood supply, areas of cartilage die and become susceptible to minor trauma leading to osteoarthritis at a very early age.



Normal shoulder joint. Smooth and rounded humeral head

Normal Joint

Certain breeds are predisposed, reinforcing the role that genes and heritability have to play. The elbow joint is very much more commonly affected and is a condition I see on a daily basis affecting Labradors, Golden retrievers and German Shepherds.

Giant breeds of dog, such as Pyrenean mountain dogs, are prone to developing lesions in their shoulder. Therefore when Erin Rawlings was presented to me at the ripe old age of 6 months with a severe left forelimb lameness this condition was uppermost in my mind despite the fact that it has been almost 10 years since I last saw such a case.



Abnormal right shoulder joint with areas of lysis and flattening of the humeral head

Abnormal joint

Radiography confirmed the diagnosis with the characteristic changes present of flattening of the ball of the shoulder joint (see www.fairfieldvets.co.uk).

When Erin failed to improve with medication her shoulder joint was then explored at surgery and a large cartilage flap which had formed was removed.

Within a few weeks she is looking much better and is using her leg well - although we are anxious to see how her right frontleg progresses as this too demonstrates less severe signs of OCD.



Very abnormal left shoulder joint with areas of lysis and flattened humeral head. Classic changes assoc with osteochondrosis.

Very abnormal joint

Despite her frequent visits Erin retains her gentle giant demeanour (thank goodness!) which is a hallmark of the breed.

Larger versions of the x-ray images are available on the Fairfield Veterinary Centre web site at www.fairfield-vets.co.uk

Terry Dunne BVMS, Cert SAO, MRCVS

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You won't care how much we know - until you know how much we care



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