

Identifying Pain in Your Pet

The following descriptions will help you to identify pain and classify it at home. This will enable us to adjust or add medication to be sure your pet is comfortable. Please call us at 949-631-1030 if you have any questions.

Pain Level	Observations
None	No pain. Relaxed and freely moving. Does not notice the surgical site. Normal attention to the environment. Interactive, playful and normal behavior.
Mild	Limps or guards affected area. Slightly depressed, may pant or breathe hard. Dogs may still wag tail and cats may still purr.
Moderate	Depressed, trembling, head down and loss of appetite. May cry or bite when touched. Abdomen tense if involved. May assume the prayer position. Doesn't sleep.
Severe	More vocalizing, more depressed and unaware of surroundings. May thrash about intermittently. May scream if approached. Increased heart rate and respiration.

We will always recommend that any patient displaying signs of moderate or severe pain be evaluated at the hospital. These patients may need to be hospitalized for more aggressive pain control.

