



My Young Basset Hound Just Started Limping...

Sometimes referred to as “growing pains” or “pano”, occurs as a rotating lameness, usually in puppies up to 18 months. Many veterinarians are not aware that this is prevalent in basset hounds and will sometimes misdiagnose it, often with costly and unneeded surgery options. Pano IS prevalent in basset hounds as we’ve seen many, many of our members’ hounds diagnosed with this over the years.

The following is from the Basset Hound Faq by Judy Trenck:

Panosteitis is an elusive ailment occasionally seen in young Bassetts. It is also known as wandering or transient lameness. Attacks are usually brought on by stress and aggravated by activity, and up to now, the cause and the cure are unknown. This mysterious disease causes sudden lameness, but its greatest potential danger may lie in false diagnosis, resulting in unnecessary surgery. A puppy will typically outgrow it by the age of two with no long term problems. It can be quite minor, or so bad that the dog will not put any weight on the leg.

Symptoms may be confused with “elbow displasia”, “hip displasia”, “patellar luxation” and other more serious disorders. The most definite way to diagnose panosteitis is radiographically. Even with this, signs can be quite minimal and easily missed. As to treatment, no cure was found in experimental

tests and the only helpful thing found was relief for pain (aspirin, cortisone, etc.) However, using these, the dog tends to exercise more and thereby aggravate the condition. Note again: A GREAT MANY VETS ARE UNAWARE OF THIS DISEASE IN THE BASSET .

In diagnosing the cause of a Basset’s lameness, a radiograph of the forelimbs may indicate a condition called elbow incongruity. (Elbow incongruity is a poor fit between the 3 bones which comprise the

elbow joint.) Studies to date indicate that elbow incongruity is normal in the Basset and is not the cause of the lameness. It is also suspected that many of the previously mentioned unnecessary (panosteitis) surgeries have been performed on Basset pups just because radiographs that were taken showed elbow incongruity.

A study on forelimb lameness in the Basset is currently underway at the School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Pennsylvania. As previously mentioned they have determined that elbow incongruity occurs in the Basset but suspect that incongruity rarely causes the lameness. During the course of the study, conservative therapy will be recommended for all cases in which panosteitis appears to be the

cause of the lameness. In cases with severe growth deformities or elbow pain associated with elbow incongruity, surgery may be recommended.

If your Basset develops lameness and is diagnosed with an “elbow problem”, discuss with your veterinarian the possibility of panosteitis.

If your veterinarian is not receptive to the possibility of pano in a basset (I had one tell me flat out that he’s never heard of them having it), please get a second opinion before having any type of surgery on your hound.

(None of this information is designed to be a substitute for veterinary care!)