

## CASE STUDY:

Bella 7yo8m neutered female Border Collie with Hip Dysplasia

The owner reported Bella had demonstrated recurrent lameness post agility and also noticed a failure to extend her hindlimbs over jumps. She had an increased tendency to sit afterwards, and tended to “pull” herself with her front legs rather than use her back end (as demonstrated in photo included). She was originally prescribed rest and non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (Metacam). Bella’s problems continued however, and x-rays were performed.

Bella was diagnosed with Hip Dysplasia October 2003. Her right hip was worse and there was pain particularly on extension of R hip. Her vets advised use of Metacam with hydrotherapy and restricted land based exercise. Her prognosis with regard’s to her agility prospects was questionable, so her owner took the responsible decision to retire this very talented performer. She began saraqin joint supplement, to help maintain her existing joint function.

Bella was referred to The Linhay during July 2006 as although retired from agility, she still demonstrated intermittent lameness and discomfort after exercise.

On examination, Bella had reduced extension and flexion of both hips, although the right hip was worse. She resented any manipulation and demonstrated a considerable pain response ie became very grumpy!. Hip extensor muscles



were very tight and there was also paraspinal spasm of the lumbar muscles (lower back).

There was considerable muscle wastage around the hips on both sides. Bella had discomfort associated with mobility changes and muscle weakness-a common, vicious cycle of events with hip dysplasia and arthritis.

On gait analysis, Bella had a typical compensatory gait pattern, using her forelimbs

and throwing herself onto her forehand, to avoid using her hindlimbs. She avoided any hip extension and generally had a very short and stilted gait.

We started acupuncture weekly for 3 weeks, and she had a response after only two treatments. Acupuncture is excellent for helping with chronic pain associated with hip dysplasia and osteoarthritis.. We also began hydrotherapy using a combination of pool and aquatic treadmill. Bella was much less grumpy on manipulation of the hips, and began to move more freely on land. Once we had adequate control of Bella’s chronic pain state, we were able to work on building up the muscle strength and endurance in her hindlimbs. If the soft tissues supporting the joint are strengthened in this way, the ball-and-socket hip joint then becomes more stable and more mobile. Sessions were biweekly initially then weekly for the first month. We continued to see an improvement in Bella’s gait and general ability to exercise on land, without stiffness afterwards. Lauren reported Bella was much happier in herself and wanting to do agility again (although not allowed too!).

**Bella, 6 months later, looks sound on land and during gait analysis on the aquatic treadmill. She has 4-6 weekly acupuncture and hydrotherapy sessions to maintain her much improved quality of life and happy retirement!**

Jubilee Barn  
Ashcombe Road  
Dawlish Water  
Dawlish  
Devon EX7 0QW

t. 01626 867614  
f. 01626 889911  
m. 07921 068088  
e. [info@linhayvet.co.uk](mailto:info@linhayvet.co.uk)  
w. [www.linhayvet.co.uk](http://www.linhayvet.co.uk)