

**HOPE FOR HEALING**

**- ARTHRITIS -**

**RELIEF FOR DOGS  
WITH LIVER DISEASE**



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## Chapter 1: Norman's Journey to Arthritis Relief

### Introduction

If you've read my book "[Hope for Healing Liver Disease in Your Dog](#)," you're already familiar with my beloved dog Norman, who suffered from severe arthritis in his back hips and knees. His condition didn't just limit his mobility; it really affected his overall quality of life, too. I often hear from pet parents worried about how to treat arthritis in dogs that also have liver disease, since this combo can complicate things. Understanding the unique challenges these dogs face, I put together this comprehensive report to tackle that important question. I want to share some insights on effective management strategies that focus on both pain relief and keeping their liver healthy.

### Norman's Journey

When Norman was diagnosed with liver disease, it felt like my world turned upside down. I knew I had to make some big changes to keep him comfortable and happy. The first step? I had to stop the strong prescription NSAIDs (Rimadyl™) he'd been taking for his arthritis for three years. While they helped relieve his pain a bit, I believe that they were likely the cause of his cirrhosis, and there was no way I was going to continue using them. All NSAIDs can be dangerous for dogs with liver problems, so I started looking for natural and safe alternatives for managing his pain.

After a lot of research and conversations with my vet, I decided to try a new treatment plan for his arthritis. I started giving him two injections of Adequan each week for three weeks, then switched to a maintenance dose once a month. This was just the beginning of my journey to improve Norman's quality of life.

### The Solution That Worked for Norman

In addition to Adequan injections, I tried other things to help Norman with his arthritis. We went to six acupuncture sessions, hoping it would ease his pain and help him heal. But the big difference came from taking a more holistic approach. I had already switched him to a homemade diet, but I knew I needed to do more for his arthritis. Since I didn't know much about anti-inflammatory diets, I started small by cutting out nightshade vegetables like potatoes, which I read could cause inflammation. I also added natural supplements and homeopathic remedies that were safe for his liver to help with his pain and inflammation.



These changes didn't just help with his pain; they also gave him more energy and improved his mood. Honestly, I don't think I would have had those extra two years with Norman without the supplements, homeopathic remedies, and the healthy diet. It was tough at first when we stopped his usual pain relievers – he was uncomfortable, and it was hard to watch him struggle.

But after we started the natural and homeopathic remedies, I saw a big improvement. He still had a bit of a limp from the arthritis, but he wasn't anxious anymore. The crying, restlessness, and panting were gone. He started sleeping through the night, relaxing during the day, and just seemed so much happier. It was such a relief to see my Norman comfortable and happy again.

## Recognizing Arthritis Pain in Dogs

Before I go into all the ways to relieve arthritis pain in dogs with liver disease, it's important to recognize the signs of arthritis pain. Knowing these early signs can help you adjust your pain management plan sooner, making a big difference in your dog's comfort and quality of life. So, keep an eye out for these common signs of pain:

- **Stiffness and Lameness:** Dogs with arthritis often show stiffness, especially after resting or sleeping. You might notice them limping or having difficulty getting up.
- **Reluctance to Move:** Your dog may be hesitant to run, jump, or climb stairs. They might also show less interest in playing or going for walks.
- **Behavioral Changes:** Arthritis pain can make dogs irritable or grumpy, sometimes appearing as aggression towards other dogs in the home. They might also become less interactive and playful.
- **Visible Discomfort:** Look for signs of pain when your dog is touched or petted. They might whine, yelp, or show other signs of discomfort.
- **Excessive Licking or Chewing:** Dogs might lick or chew at their joints or paws. For example, Norman used to lick his front leg and paw, which I later learned was a sign of pain.
- **Panting:** Increased panting can be a sign of discomfort or pain. When Norman was in extreme pain he would pace and pant.
- **Weight Gain:** Due to reduced activity, dogs with arthritis may gain weight, which can further exacerbate their joint pain.
- **Muscle Loss:** You might notice a loss of muscle mass, particularly in the limbs and spine, as your dog avoids using painful joints.

- **Difficulty with Routine Activities:** Dogs with arthritis often face challenges when it comes to urinating or defecating. Instead of squatting, they might walk while doing their business because squatting can be painful. This discomfort can also make them move more slowly when going up and down stairs. For example, Norman struggled to squat to poop; his legs would give out, causing him to fall backward. He also had a hard time going up and down the three steps to go outside. Instead of climbing the steps, he would hop with his back legs.
- **Sleeping More:** Dogs with arthritis often sleep more than usual as a way to cope with the pain. Norman would sleep all day under my desk while I worked.

## Effective Arthritis Treatments

After researching liver disease, I started on a new research expedition looking into other more holistic ways to treat Norman's arthritis. What I learned was overwhelming at first. But don't worry, I'll share the various treatments that I explored for Norman. Each of these options has its benefits! This section will give you a quick overview of them so you can decide if they're worth trying for your liver dog.

### **Adequan Injections:**

One of the first treatments I tried for Norman was Adequan injections. These injections were a game-changer. They helped reduce inflammation and pain while promoting cartilage repair. Administering these injections twice a week for three weeks, and then switching to a maintenance dose once a month, made a noticeable difference in Norman's ability to walk more comfortably.

### **Acupuncture:**

I tried acupuncture as another therapy for Norman, but unfortunately, it didn't give him the relief I was hoping for. He was ok while receiving the needles but he didn't like having to wait for 30 minutes before they took them out. He would shake while we waited, never relaxing like I've heard other dogs do. After the treatment, he seemed really relaxed and had some relief, so I kept going with it. I was told not to expect much after just one session, so we went through a series of six treatments. These focused on specific points for his liver and his hip and knee pain. When I saw his x-rays later, it was clear just how bad the osteoarthritis was in his joints, which made me realize that acupuncture wasn't the right fit for his arthritis. However, I believe it still helped support his liver during the healing process.



## **Homeopathic Remedies:**

I also explored homeopathic remedies tailored to Norman's symptoms. I had never tried homeopathic remedies before, so this was all new to me. One of the holistic veterinarians I spoke to on the phone shared with me the benefits of these treatments and just how safe they are for the liver. So naturally, I had to do some research.

Homeopathy is based on the principle of "like cures like," using highly diluted substances to trigger the body's natural healing processes. These remedies are designed to address specific symptoms and are known for their gentle approach, making them an excellent choice for dogs with liver disease.

For Norman, I used remedies such as Rhus Toxicodendron for joint stiffness and Arnica Montana for pain and inflammation. These remedies were administered by crushing the tiny pellets into a powder and then putting the powder in his mouth on his tongue every 4 hours. I was amazed at how effective they were. They worked so well, I used them for the rest of his life. They were the safest option I had at the time.

## **MSM and Zyflamend:**

I also tried natural supplements like MSM and Zyflamend to help ease Norman's pain and inflammation. I used the human versions since there weren't any dog-specific supplements available back then. I'll share more details about these and other supplements later in the book.

## **Comfortable Bedding:**

Finally, I searched for a more comfortable bedding option. Norman couldn't jump up on the bed anymore, and a regular dog bed just wasn't cutting it for support. I came across a raised platform bed that helped relieve pressure on his joints and eased some arthritis pain. This was before all the fancy orthopedic bedding options we have today!

In the next sections of this book, I'll explain each of these treatments in detail. I'll give you an overview of how they work, their benefits, and any potential side effects. I'll also discuss new supplements, innovative therapies, and advanced treatments that have come up in the last 20 years. My goal is to help you understand your options and how they've evolved in veterinary medicine.

**Just because your dog has liver disease doesn't mean they have to suffer from the pain of arthritis.**



Norman's journey really shows the power of natural treatments and how important it is to have a customized approach to managing arthritis in dogs, especially those dealing with liver issues. As I went on this journey with Norman, I learned that addressing both arthritis and cirrhosis meant truly understanding his unique health needs. I made some changes to his diet and added in some holistic therapies, all to help improve his quality of life. I hope Norman's story inspires you to look into all the options out there and take the best care of your canine companion. After all, your dog's health and happiness are just a little extra love away! Giving them that special attention can make a world of difference in their quality of life!

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## Chapter 2: Supplements to Treat Arthritis

### Introduction to Supplements

If your dog had arthritis before developing liver disease, you're probably already giving them some nutritional supplements to support their joints, like glucosamine or omega-3 fatty acids. These can really help reduce inflammation and help with mobility, which makes a big difference in your pup's quality of life. If you haven't jumped on the supplement train yet, here are some supplement options to get you started on the path to better joint health for your liver dog!

#### **Glucosamine HCl and Chondroitin Sulfate:**

These ingredients are commonly used to help treat osteoarthritis. Glucosamine helps build and keep cartilage healthy, while Chondroitin stops harmful enzymes in the joints. Together, they help repair and create new cartilage. These supplements are not pain relievers, but they help heal damage over time. It usually takes at least six weeks to notice any effects, and they need to be taken for life to stop further cartilage damage. It's best to use products with pure, human-grade ingredients or veterinary products like Cosequin.

But here's the thing: if your dog has severe osteoarthritis, starting on these supplements might not make a huge difference since the joint damage is already done and the condition is often pretty advanced. When I asked my vet about giving them to Norman, she explained that while these supplements can work wonders for early-stage osteoarthritis or as a preventative option, they might not give the relief that dogs with chronic pain and stiffness really need.

#### **Polysulfated Glycosaminoglycan (Adequan):**

Adequan is an injectable treatment known as a "polysulfated glycosaminoglycan," which is similar to the more common supplement glucosamine that you take by mouth. When given as an injection, Adequan helps to prevent cartilage from breaking down and may help create new cartilage. It protects and helps build cartilage with few side effects, although some dogs might have an upset stomach or, in rare cases, low platelet counts.

When given as an injection into a dog's muscles, Adequan is absorbed by inflamed joints. It helps soothe and lubricate the joint, reducing inflammation and pain by lowering friction. Unlike NSAIDs, which only cover up the pain, **Adequan actually helps rebuild cartilage in damaged joints. It's more than just pain relief; it's a treatment.** For better results, Adequan can be used with oral glucosamine and chondroitin supplements.



## Chapter 3: Pain Relief for Arthritis

### Introduction to Pain Relief Options

When it comes to managing arthritis pain in dogs, especially if they have liver disease, it's important to think carefully about safe and effective treatments. In this section, I'll go over different options—from natural supplements to prescribed meds—that can help ease your dog's discomfort. By knowing the benefits and possible risks of each treatment, you'll be better prepared to make the right choices for your dog's health and happiness.

#### Methyl-sulfonyl-methane (MSM):

MSM is a natural substance that contains sulfur, which helps keep connective tissues healthy and can reduce scar tissue. It has powerful effects that can reduce inflammation and relieve pain, and it can be taken in high dosages.

#### Zyflamend:

This supplement mixes ten herbs, like turmeric and ginger, to help the body deal with inflammation. Originally made for people, Zyflamend was the best natural choice I could find at the time. I tried it with Norman but I didn't see significant results so I didn't continue to use it. There are now special supplements for dogs that contain the same or similar ingredients to help with hip and joint pain.

#### S-Adenosyl-L-methionine (SAME, Denosyl SD4):

SAME, or S-adenosylmethionine, is an important compound that helps liver dogs in many ways. It helps the liver work better and can help heal liver cells, which is great for managing liver issues. It also has anti-inflammatory properties, making it a good choice for dogs with osteoarthritis because it reduces pain and swelling in their joints, allowing them to move more easily and live a better life. By including SAME in their treatment, you can help your dog's liver and arthritis.

These were the supplements I used for Norman. Twenty years ago, they were the only options available. Today, there are many more choices. In addition to these supplements, veterinarians might also recommend medications like gabapentin and tramadol for managing arthritis pain in dogs with liver disease. However, it's crucial to understand the potential risks and side effects of these medications before using them.



## Chapter 4: Understanding Medications

### Warning:

It's pretty common for vets to prescribe gabapentin and tramadol when dealing with pain management. They can help relieve pain and discomfort, but there are a few things you should know about these meds before jumping on the bandwagon. In this section, I'll go over the uses, benefits, and risks of gabapentin and tramadol, so you can make the best choices for your liver dog!

### **Gabapentin**

Gabapentin is commonly prescribed for neuropathic pain and as an adjunct for chronic pain management. It works by inhibiting the release of excitatory neurotransmitters, which helps reduce pain and anxiety. However, gabapentin is metabolized by both the kidneys and liver in dogs. This dual metabolism can be a concern for dogs with liver disease, as it may prolong side effects such as sedation and loss of coordination. Long-term use requires careful monitoring of liver and kidney function.

Gabapentin was not available when I had Norman, so I didn't explore this option.

### **Tramadol**

Tramadol is an opioid-like pain reliever used for moderate to severe pain. It alters the transmission and perception of pain, providing relief. However, its effectiveness in dogs is debated, with some studies suggesting limited benefits for chronic pain like osteoarthritis. Tramadol is metabolized in the liver, which can place additional stress on this organ. It can cause side effects such as sedation, nausea, and constipation. For dogs with liver disease, tramadol should be used with caution and under close veterinary supervision due to its potential impact on liver function.

While gabapentin and tramadol can be used under a vet's supervision, it's important to balance their benefits with the potential risks. It's always a good idea to explore natural, holistic options like glucosamine and chondroitin with MSM and consider even safer homeopathic remedies.



## Chapter 5: Homeopathic Remedies for Pain

### Introduction to Homeopathic Remedies

Homeopathic remedies are a safe way to relieve immediate pain and joint stiffness. The specific remedies depend on the symptoms and include various options. I used a few of these remedies for Norman every 4 hours to help manage his discomfort.

### Specific Remedies

- Rhus toxicodendron: For chronic arthritis, pain, or stiffness that improves with movement.
- Silicea: For inherited joint and bone disease problems.
- Bryonia: For dogs that appear better at rest and worse after movement.
- Calcarea fluorica: For boney deposits and crackling noises in joints.
- Actaea racemosa: For arthritis of the hips and lower vertebrae.
- Lithium carbonicum: For hip arthritis and difficulty climbing stairs.

A typical homeopathic dosage is 6C twice a day for any size dog. Consult with a Homeopathic Vet for specific dosage instructions for your dog and other remedies.

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## Chapter 6: Additional Antioxidants and Anti-Inflammatory Supplements for Overall Health

### Introduction

In my book "Hope for Healing Liver Disease in Your Dog" I go over many supplements but I was focused primarily on supplements for the liver and the liver-friendly diet. The supplements in this book focus on the specific antioxidants and anti-inflammatory supplements that not only support the liver and overall health but also help manage arthritis pain.

### **Vitamin E**

In my liver disease book, I highlight the important synergistic role of vitamin E alongside Milk Thistle in supporting and healing the liver. Not only does vitamin E play a critical role in liver health, but it is also an anti-inflammatory that benefits joint health. I discovered that adding vitamin E to Norman's diet made a significant difference, and I recommend it for anyone dealing with liver and arthritis conditions.

### **Vitamin C**

Vitamin C is important for collagen and cartilage synthesis, which are crucial for joint health. I used Ester-C with bioflavonoids for Norman because it's easier on the stomach and more effective. This supplement helped support his joints and contributed to his overall health.

### **Omega-3 Fatty Acids**

Omega-3 fatty acids, found in fish and fish oil, are known for their anti-inflammatory benefits. They play a key role in reducing inflammation and promoting joint health. A liver-friendly diet includes cod as an excellent protein source and includes the use of wild Alaskan salmon oil, especially if you're not already using fish in their diet. Don't miss out on incorporating fish into your dog's homemade meals; it's great for both liver health and arthritis. Additionally, remember to include Vitamin E when giving fish oil to ensure a balanced intake of antioxidants. Without vitamin E, a fish oil supplement can oxidize, deplete vitamin E, and lead to cell damage.



## **Creatine**

Creatine helps with muscle atrophy associated with osteoarthritis. It supports muscle strength and energy, which can be particularly beneficial for dogs with limited mobility.

## **Ginger**

Ginger contains compounds like gingerol, which have potent anti-inflammatory and antioxidant effects. Studies have shown that ginger can effectively reduce inflammation and pain, particularly in conditions like osteoarthritis. Ginger may be more effective for acute inflammation than turmeric for conditions like osteoarthritis due to its better absorption and additional digestive benefits.

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## Chapter 7: Natural Joint Supplements

### Introduction

When it comes to managing arthritis in dogs with liver disease, natural joint supplements can play a crucial role. These supplements not only help reduce inflammation and pain but also support overall joint health. In this chapter, I'll share some of the natural joint supplements that have shown promise in improving mobility and comfort for dogs with arthritis. I'll also share some thoughts on things to keep in mind for dogs with liver disease.

#### **Missing Link™ Hip & Joint Supplement:**

Missing Link™ Hip & Joint Supplement is a comprehensive supplement designed to support joint health. It contains glucosamine, chondroitin, MSM, and hyaluronic acid, which work together to reduce inflammation, support cartilage repair, and improve mobility. Additionally, this supplement is rich in omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids, which promote healthy skin and coat. I used this supplement with Norman, and it not only helped his joints it also provided important nutrients like omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids to his diet. It wasn't just a joint supplement; it was a solid nutritional boost too. Twenty years ago, my options were pretty limited, so Missing Link was a lifesaver for both me and Norman!

#### **Green-Lipped Mussel:**

Green-lipped mussels are a natural source of omega-3 fatty acids and glycosaminoglycans, which help reduce inflammation and support joint health. This supplement is particularly beneficial for dogs with arthritis, as it can help alleviate pain and improve mobility.

#### **Boswellia Serrata:**

While *Boswellia serrata* has anti-inflammatory properties that can benefit dogs with arthritis, it should be **used cautiously in dogs with liver disease**. It works by inhibiting the production of inflammatory enzymes, which helps to alleviate joint discomfort and support overall joint health.



### **Eggshell Membrane:**

Eggshell membrane contains naturally occurring glucosamine, chondroitin, and hyaluronic acid, which support joint health and reduce inflammation. This supplement is derived from the thin membrane lining the eggshell and is known for its ability to promote cartilage repair and improve joint function.

### **Golden Paste:**

Golden Paste is a mixture of turmeric, black pepper, and coconut oil. It enhances the absorption of curcumin, the active compound in turmeric, which has powerful anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. Golden Paste helps by reducing inflammation and providing pain relief.

However, I recently read that black pepper (piperine) used to enhance curcumin absorption can interfere with liver enzymes and the metabolism of certain medications. And I also read that turmeric can stimulate bile production and has blood-thinning properties, which could exacerbate liver issues. For these reasons, **it may be better to skip Golden Paste and use one of the other supplements.**

### **CBD (Cannabidiol):**

CBD has become popular for its potential to help dogs in so many ways. It's said to ease pain and reduce inflammation, chill them out when they're anxious, improve their skin, help manage seizures, boost their heart health, and even stimulate appetite. It works by interacting with the endocannabinoid system, which helps regulate pain and inflammation. Some studies show that CBD can have positive results for pain relief and improved quality of life in dogs with arthritis, but it seems like you have to give them a pretty high dose for it to work.

### **However, there are important considerations:**

**Effectiveness:** CBD can provide pain relief along with many other benefits.

**Safety:** CBD is generally safe, but it **can cause** diarrhea and **changes in liver enzyme values**. It can also inhibit cytochrome P450, a chemical responsible for metabolizing many drugs, potentially leading to interactions with other medications.

**Conflicting Information:** There is conflicting information about the use of CBD in dogs with liver issues. Some sources suggest it can be beneficial, while others caution against its use due to potential liver enzyme changes. Given this uncertainty, **I generally do not recommend CBD for dogs with liver disease.**

## Popular OTC Hip & Joint Supplements

When I was taking care of Norman, there weren't any hip and joint supplements for dogs. At least, I wasn't aware of any at the time. Now, there are so many options available that it can be overwhelming to choose the right one. Instead of focusing on specific brands, here are some general guidelines on what to look for in a joint supplement:

- **Comprehensive Formulas:** Look for supplements that combine multiple beneficial ingredients like glucosamine, chondroitin, MSM, and hyaluronic acid.
- **Natural Ingredients:** Supplements with natural anti-inflammatory ingredients like green-lipped mussel, and Boswellia Serrata can provide additional benefits.
- **Ease of Administration:** Choose a form that is easy to give to your dog, such as chewable tablets or soft chews.

## Ingredients to Avoid

When selecting a joint supplement for a dog with liver disease, it's crucial to choose ingredients that support joint health without putting additional strain on the liver. Here are some guidelines on what to avoid:

**High Copper Content:** Avoid supplements with high levels of copper, as it can accumulate in the liver and cause damage. Examples include beef liver, duck, pork, or any organ meat.

**Artificial Additives and Preservatives:** These can be hard on the liver and should be avoided. Examples include BHA, BHT, Ethoxyquin, Propylene Glycol, Sodium Benzoate, and artificial colors like Blue 2, Red 40, and Yellow 5.

**Excessive Vitamin A:** High doses can be toxic to the liver. Examples include supplements containing beef liver or organ meat.

**White Willow Bark:** Contains salicin, which is similar to aspirin and can cause liver issues.

**Devil's Claw Root:** May have anti-inflammatory properties similar to NSAIDs and is harmful to the liver.



**Licorice Root:** Can affect liver enzymes and should be used with caution.

**St. John's Wort:** Can interact with liver enzymes and should be used with caution.

### **Key Considerations**

- **Quality and Purity:** Choose high-quality supplements from reputable brands to ensure they are effective and do not contain harmful contaminants.
- **Therapeutic Dosage:** Ensure that each active ingredient is present in a therapeutic amount suitable for your dog's size. While cheaper supplements are available, they often contain lower levels of active ingredients and may not be as effective. When comparing supplements, always check the active ingredients and their amounts to ensure you're getting a product that will be beneficial for your dog.

### **Please Read Important Warning**

**All supplements must be processed by the liver, so caution should always be exercised when introducing any new supplement to your dog's regimen.** Dogs with liver disease or compromised liver function are particularly vulnerable to potential adverse effects. It is crucial to closely monitor your dog for any signs of a negative reaction when starting a new supplement. If your dog exhibits any adverse symptoms, such as gastrointestinal upset, lethargy, or changes in behavior, discontinue use immediately and consult with your veterinarian.

## Comprehensive Table of Supplements for Dogs with Arthritis

Supplement	Benefits	Dosage per 10 lbs	Safety Concerns	Side Effects
Glucosamine	Supports cartilage repair and joint health	500 mg/25 lbs	Generally safe, but consult vet if dog has diabetes or bleeding disorders	Mild gastrointestinal upset
Chondroitin	Inhibits cartilage-damaging enzymes	33-66 mg/lb	Safe, but ensure product quality and purity	Diarrhea, nausea
MSM (Methylsulfonyl methane)	Reduces inflammation and pain, reduces growth of liver cancer, supports liver detoxification	50-100 mg/10 lbs	Safe for most dogs, but can interact with medications.	Diarrhea, stomach upset. Can affect liver enzymes and potentially stress kidneys.
Omega-3 Fatty Acids	Reduces inflammation, supports joint health	90-360 mg or 1 ml of oil /10 lbs	Ensure proper balance with Omega-6 fatty acids	Fishy odor, gastrointestinal upset
Green-Lipped Mussel	Reduces inflammation, supports joint health	150 mg/10 lbs	Generally safe, but monitor for shellfish allergies	Gastrointestinal upset
Turmeric (Golden Paste)	Anti-inflammatory, antioxidant	10-15 mg/lb	Can interact with medications, stimulate bile production and tax the liver, consult vet and use with caution.	Gastrointestinal upset, constipation, thin blood, may elevate liver enzymes
Boswellia Serrata	Reduces inflammation and pain, liver protective	50 mg/10 lbs	Generally safe. Some sources recommend caution in dogs with liver issues.	Diarrhea, nausea
CBD (Cannabidiol)	Reduces pain and inflammation	0.5 mg/lb twice a day	Can affect liver enzymes, potential drug interactions, consult vet and use with caution	Diarrhea, changes in liver enzyme values
SAMe (S-Adenosyl-L-Methionine)	Anti-inflammatory, supports liver function	9 mg/lb or 225 mg /25 lbs	Safe, but consult vet if dog is on other medications	Mild gastrointestinal upset
Vitamin E	Antioxidant, supports immune function	50-100 IU/10 lbs	Overdose can cause bleeding disorders	Rare, but may include gastrointestinal upset

Supplement	Benefits	Dosage per 10 lbs	Safety Concerns	Side Effects
Vitamin C (Ester-C)	Supports collagen synthesis, antioxidant	50-100mg /10 lbs	Generally safe, but high doses can cause gastrointestinal upset	Diarrhea, stomach upset
Ginger	Anti-inflammatory, supports digestion	1/4 tsp or 100 mg /10 lbs	Generally safe, but consult vet if dog has bleeding disorders	Mild gastrointestinal upset

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## Chapter 8: A Holistic Approach to Managing Arthritis in Dogs

### Introduction

Managing arthritis in dogs, especially those with liver disease, requires a comprehensive and holistic approach. It's not just about treating the symptoms but also about enhancing their overall quality of life. In this chapter, I'll share practical tips and natural treatments that can make daily activities less painful and improve your dog's overall wellbeing. By integrating these strategies, you can help your furry friend live a more comfortable and fulfilling life.

### Making Daily Activities Less Painful

**Navigating Stairs:** Arthritis can make it difficult for dogs to manage stairs, especially when they need to go outside for bathroom breaks. Building or buying ramps, particularly for stairs leading outside, can significantly ease this challenge.

**Elevating Food and Water Bowls:** For larger breeds, raising food and water bowls can make mealtime more comfortable, especially if your dog has stiffness in their neck or back.

**Comfortable Bedding:** Make sure your dog has a firm, orthopedic foam bed for the best support. In the winter, add a heating blanket or a low-heating pad under a blanket to provide soothing warmth.

**Keeping Warm:** Cold, damp weather can exacerbate arthritis symptoms. Keeping your dog warm with a cozy pet sweater, providing access to a low-heating blanket, or maintaining a warmer home environment can help them feel more comfortable.

**Adding Rugs or Non-Slip Flooring:** Adding rugs or non-slip flooring can make it easier for your dog to move around without slipping, providing a safer and more comfortable environment.



## Enhancing Overall Wellbeing

**Exercise:** While it might seem like exercise could cause more pain, too little activity can actually be more harmful. However, it's crucial to choose the right type of exercise to avoid causing harm. Low-impact activities like leash walking, swimming, or hydrotherapy are excellent for maintaining muscle mass and reducing joint stress. Staying active daily, rather than just on weekends, is important. Additionally, incorporating a warm-up before exercise and a cool-down afterward can be very beneficial.

**Weight Management:** Maintaining a healthy weight is essential for reducing stress on your dog's joints. If your dog is overweight, consider starting a weight reduction program. Follow the Liver-Friendly Diet Blueprint and use a [calorie calculator](#) to ensure you're not overfeeding. Avoid extra table scraps and opt for low-calorie treats like carrot sticks, celery, and berries.

Helping your dog reach and maintain their ideal weight is one of the most important things you can do for their health. While it may be challenging, it's worth the effort. As the pet parent, you have control over what your dog eats. Feeding a fresh, liver-friendly homemade diet in appropriate amounts and keeping treats to a minimum will help your dog lose weight, relieve arthritis pain, and support liver health.

Updating this special report has reminded me of my own journey with Norman. I remember now that he was overweight for several years. He was tipping the scales at 32 pounds, well above his ideal weight of 25-30 pounds. It's shocking to think that he was roughly 14% over his ideal weight, like a 150-pound woman carrying an extra 20 points. I had no idea at the time, but his weight definitely contributed to his arthritis and liver disease.

I also realized that thankfully, after switching to a homemade liver-friendly diet, Norman dropped the excess weight effortlessly, settling at a healthy 24 pounds for the rest of his life. This weight loss made a noticeable difference in his mobility and overall well-being.

## Other Natural Treatments

**Acupuncture:** This traditional Chinese medicine technique can help reduce pain and improve mobility by stimulating specific points on the body. Acupuncture increases circulation, relieves muscle spasms, and releases endorphins, making your dog feel better.



**Acupressure:** This ancient healing technique can help alleviate pain and improve mobility by applying gentle pressure to specific points on the body. Acupressure enhances circulation, reduces inflammation, and promotes the release of natural pain-relieving endorphins, helping your dog feel more comfortable and relaxed. For example, applying pressure to points on the ear, BL60 (Bladder 60) near the ankle, K3 (Kidney 3) on the inner ankle, GB29 (Gallbladder 29) and GB30 (Gallbladder 30) near the hip, and LIV3 (Liver 3) on the paw can help reduce arthritis pain.

One easy technique is to gently hold the ear between your thumb and fingers and rub from the tip to the base where it meets the skull. Your dog will most likely enjoy this soothing massage and may even lean into it. This can help relax your dog and ease their pain. Be gentle and watch for any signs of discomfort. Do not do this if your dog is showing signs of ear pain, such as shaking their head or a hot, inflamed ear. Your dog should feel more comfortable and relaxed after a few minutes of this soothing massage.

**Chiropractic Treatment:** Chiropractic care involves the manual adjustment of the spine and joints to improve mobility, reduce pain, and enhance overall well-being. This treatment can be particularly beneficial for dogs with arthritis, as it helps to realign the spine, reduce joint stress, and improve nervous system function. Regular chiropractic sessions can alleviate pain, increase range of motion, and promote a better quality of life for your dog.

**Massage Therapy:** Massage offers numerous benefits for dogs experiencing arthritis pain. It can help alleviate muscle tension and stiffness while promoting relaxation and reducing stress. Improved circulation from massage can also decrease inflammation and encourage healing. Additionally, regular massage sessions can strengthen the bond between you and your dog, providing comfort and enhancing their overall well-being.

**Contrast (Cold and Heat) Therapy:** Alternating between hot and cold water can be an effective way to manage your dog's arthritis symptoms. Applying cold packs or cold water can reduce inflammation and numb pain, while heat packs or hot water can relax muscles and improve blood flow helping with stiff joints.

**Hydrotherapy:** Hydrotherapy involves controlled exercises performed in water to help reduce pain and improve mobility. The buoyancy of water supports your dog's weight, reducing stress on their joints and allowing for more comfortable movement. This treatment can enhance muscle strength, flexibility, and circulation, while also reducing inflammation. Regular hydrotherapy sessions can alleviate pain, increase range of motion, and promote a better quality of life for your dog.



## Chapter 9: Natural Homemade Diet For Arthritis Support

### Introduction

Along with providing your dog a liver-friendly fresh food diet as detailed in "*Hope for Healing Liver Disease in Your Dog*," you can also support their arthritis management with a few simple adjustments. In this chapter, I'll share dietary tips to help reduce inflammation, promote joint health, and maintain a healthy weight for your liver dog.

### Emphasize Fresh Food

Fresh, whole foods are generally less inflammatory and lower in calories compared to highly processed kibble. This makes them better for reducing joint pain due to inflammation and easier for your dog to maintain a healthy weight. Incorporating fresh foods into your dog's diet can make a significant difference in their overall health and comfort.

### Include Anti-Inflammatory Ingredients

Incorporate foods like sweet potatoes, broccoli, blueberries, and ginger into your dog's diet. These ingredients help reduce inflammation and support joint health. Adding these anti-inflammatory foods can provide natural relief from arthritis symptoms.

### Remove Pro-Inflammatory Ingredients

Avoid feeding your dog red meat, which can cause inflammation. Opt for fish instead, as it is a great source of omega-3 fatty acids that help reduce inflammation. Avoid omega-6 pro-inflammatory oils like sunflower seed oil, safflower seed oil, and canola oil. Use flaxseed oil or extra-virgin olive oil instead. Reduce or eliminate white potatoes and grains like white rice and wheat. Use sweet potatoes, oatmeal, squash, organic non-GMO brown rice, or quinoa instead. These changes can help minimize inflammation and support your dog's joint health.



## Maintain a Healthy Weight

Use a [calorie calculator](#) to ensure your dog is not overeating, especially if they are prone to obesity and inactivity. Keeping your dog at a healthy weight reduces stress on their joints and alleviates arthritis symptoms. Maintaining an ideal weight is one of the most important things you can do for your dog's health. It may be challenging, but it's worth the effort to see your dog more comfortable and active.

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## Chapter 10: Anti-Inflammatory Liver-Friendly Diet Blueprint

### Introduction

I'm thrilled to introduce an innovative approach to a liver-friendly diet that also helps with arthritis all while focusing on anti-inflammatory benefits. Starting with a fresh diet is a great first step in healing liver disease, and now, by adding an anti-inflammatory twist, we're taking it to the next level.

In this chapter, I'll share an updated blueprint for an anti-inflammatory liver-friendly diet, consistent with the principles outlined in my liver disease book. This blueprint includes an updated table highlighting foods to avoid due to their inflammatory properties, simple recipes, and a full balanced Anti-Inflammatory Liver Cleansing Diet/Recipe.

The updated table features an additional column for foods to avoid, marked in **red** for their pro-inflammatory properties. Foods listed in **blue** are anti-inflammatory and can help reduce inflammation. By following this blueprint, you can provide your dog with a diet that not only supports liver function but also helps manage arthritis symptoms, leading to a happier tail-wagging dog.



Category	Amount	Liver-Friendly Foods	Limit	Avoid: Inflammatory	Avoid
Protein	15-35% of the meal	<b>white fish</b> , chicken, turkey, omega eggs, cottage cheese, yogurt, tofu, TVP	chicken liver, nut butter, <b>chickpeas, beans, lentils</b>	<b>beef</b> , cheese	raw meat, beef liver, duck, lamb, salmon, tuna, sardines, pork, organs
Fat	0-2 tsp or 1-2 tbsp a day	flaxseed oil, extra virgin coconut oil, extra virgin olive oil, <b>camelina oil, primrose oil, hemp oil</b>	<b>salmon oil**</b> , ground flax seeds, ground chia seeds, ground hemp seeds	<b>sunflower oil, safflower oil, canola oil</b>	generic fish oil, cod liver oil, corn oil, vegetable oil, butter, lard, bacon fat, margarine
Carbohydrate	35 to 60% of the meal	<b>sweet potatoes</b> , oatmeal, <b>squash</b> , millet, amaranth, buckwheat	quinoa, barley, brown rice*	<b>white potatoes, white rice*, wheat, pasta*</b> ,	wheat gluten, couscous, rye
Vegetables	20 to 30% of the meal	zucchini, <b>green beans</b> , carrots, <b>cucumber</b> , pumpkin, celery, artichoke	<b>broccoli, cauliflower</b> , brussels sprouts, cabbage, <b>kale, spinach</b>	beets, peas, radish	mushrooms, beet greens, rhubarb, asparagus, swiss chard, tomato, onion, chives
Fruit	0 to 5% of the meal	<b>blueberries*</b> , watermelon, papaya	<b>cranberries, raspberries, strawberries*, pineapple</b>	apples, bananas, pear, peaches, plums, kiwis	raisins, grapes, lemons, limes, grapefruit, oranges
Herbs, Spices	Amount varies, see guidelines	<b>parsley</b> , dill, oregano, thyme, basil, sage, licorice root, artichoke leaf	<b>ginger, turmeric</b>	nutritional yeast, garlic, cilantro	onion powder, salt
Calcium	Amount varies, see guidelines	calcium carbonate, calcium citrate, eggshell powder			bone meal, bones
Supplements	Amount varies, see guidelines	Multi-Vitamin, B-Complex, Vitamin E, Vitamin C, Zinc	Vitamin D, CBD		copper, Vitamin A

Notes: \* Organic, Non-GMO

\*\* Wild or Sustainably Harvested



## Simple Recipe Examples

As a quick reminder, the Liver-Friendly Diet Blueprint is designed to promote liver regeneration, reduce inflammation, and prevent further damage. It focuses on specific nutrient combinations that support and enhance liver function. By being low in sodium and copper, while high in easily digestible carbohydrates and the appropriate amount of protein, fat, and fiber, this diet provides the ideal balance for optimal liver function. The blueprint includes a variety of nutritious fresh foods such as vegetables, whole grains, potatoes, lean meats, white fish, dairy protein, and eggs, along with healthy fats like coconut oil or flaxseed oil.

I've adapted the simple examples from my liver disease book to also include anti-inflammatory benefits that can help manage arthritis symptoms.

Here are a few easy recipes to get you started.

These examples show you how to use a specific ratio of protein, carbohydrates, and vegetables by volume. For example, a 25/45/30 ratio means that 25% of the recipe consists of protein, 45% of carbohydrates, and 30% of vegetables.

They differ from a traditional recipe in that instead of explaining how to cook each ingredient, the focus is on the ratio rather than the cooking method. All of the ingredients are cooked beforehand and then combined according to the ratio and served. If you aren't sure how to cook something or need more explanation, refer to the Liver-Friendly Diet Blueprint in my book on liver disease.

These recipes aren't meant to be complete and balanced; they're just a starting point to show you how I tweaked the original recipes into anti-inflammatory versions. Each recipe includes an explanation of its benefits and ingredients.

### 25/45/30: Just starting out

¼ cup cooked chicken breast,  
½ cup of cooked oatmeal,  
⅓ cup of cooked and chopped carrots,  
⅓ cup of cooked and chopped broccoli,  
⅛ tsp flaxseed oil,  
Vetri Science Canine Multi-vitamin supplement (daily)

*This is a basic liver-friendly recipe that is moderate in protein and is a great choice when just starting out. The ingredients are easy to find. The Vetri Science Canine Multi-vitamin supplement ensures that your dog is getting the necessary vitamins and minerals.*

### 15/60/25: Shunt or HE, low protein

1/3 cup of poached lean ground turkey,  
1 1/4 cup cooked, skinned and chopped sweet potato,  
1/4 cup cooked and chopped zucchini,  
1/4 cup cooked and chopped green beans,  
1/4 tsp parsley  
1/4 tsp eggshell powder,  
Vetri-Science Canine Liver supplement (daily)

*This liver-friendly recipe is lower in protein and is a great choice for dogs with shunts or showing signs of HE (protein intolerance). The VetriScience Canine Liver supplement ensures that your dog is getting the key vitamins and minerals that support liver function.*

### 1/3rd of each: Maintenance

1/3 cup of poached lean ground turkey or chicken breast,  
1/3 cup cooked, skinned and chopped sweet potato,  
1/3 cup cooked, chopped Normandy mix vegetables  
1/2 tsp eggshell powder  
1/4 tsp Missing Link™  
Vetri-Science Canine Liver supplement (daily)

*This liver-friendly recipe is higher in protein and is a great choice for dogs who are in maintenance mode. The ingredients include Missing Link™ for joint support. The VetriScience Canine Liver supplement ensures that your dog is getting the key vitamins and minerals that support liver function.*

## Anti-Inflammatory Liver Cleansing Diet/Recipe

This recipe builds on the basic liver cleansing diet from my book, but I've adapted it to be anti-inflammatory for dogs dealing with arthritis and liver disease. Instead of white potatoes, it uses oatmeal and includes nutrient-packed anti-inflammatory ingredients like kale, blueberries, and the Missing Link supplement. This recipe is a great example of a complete and balanced, liver-friendly anti-inflammatory diet, bringing together all the principles I discussed in this chapter.

## Ingredients

Amount	Unit	Ingredient	Gram
1	filet	Cod fish, poached or cooked with dry heat	180
1	egg	Eggs, Omega Plus Egg, large, scrambled or hard boiled	50
0.5	cup	Oatmeal, dry (before cooking)	24.4
1	cup	Sweet potato, cooked, baked in skin, without salt	200
1	cup, sliced	Zucchini, includes skin, cooked, boiled, drained, without salt	180
1	cup	Green beans, cooked, boiled, drained, without salt	125
0.25	cup, chopped or diced	Kale, frozen, cooked, boiled, drained, without salt	32.5
0.25	tsp	Spices, parsley, dried (optional)	0.12
0.25	cup	Blueberries, raw (optional)	37
0.5	tsp	NOW Calcium Carbonate Pure Powder	1.7
2	tsp	Missing Link™ - Hip & Joint Formula	5.33
1	capsules	Solgar Vitamin E 100 IU	5
1	capsules	Vetri Liver Canine Supplement Bite-Sized Chews - 1 per 30 lb	3

## Instructions

1. Bake the sweet potatoes at 425 F for 30-45 min or until soft. When cooled, remove the skins and smash or chop into bite-size pieces.
2. Cook oatmeal according to the package.
3. Scramble, poach or hard boil the egg.
4. Wash the vegetables, steam or cook until very tender. If frozen, cook according to the package.
5. Bake or poach Cod fish in a frying pan with water until the fish is white and flaky.
6. Mix all cooked ingredients and spices together until it is well blended.
7. Add calcium to the entire mixture.
8. Add Missing Link™ to the entire batch or add the appropriate amount to each meal.
9. Give multivitamin and other supplements as directed.
10. Give blueberries as treats or mix in the individual meal.

This recipe is good for feeding a 30lb dog for a day. It's best for the liver to split it into 3 to 4 meals throughout the day. This diet has 656 calories, with about 36% from protein, 14% from fat, and 44% from carbohydrates. Just make sure to add all the necessary supplements for it to be Complete & Balanced!

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## Chapter 11: New Treatments for Arthritis

### Introduction

As we learn more about canine arthritis, the treatment options for our canine companions are also evolving, helping them live more comfortable lives. In this chapter, I'll talk about some of the latest and most innovative ways to manage arthritis in dogs. From cutting-edge therapies like cold laser and PEMF to holistic methods like hydrotherapy and physiotherapy, these new approaches offer great ways to reduce pain and boost mobility. I'll also share my research and thoughts on Librela, a new monoclonal antibody treatment, and talk about its potential benefits and risks. Whether you're after non-invasive solutions or advanced medical treatments, this chapter gives you a solid guide to the latest advancements in arthritis care for dogs.

I'm excited to share some cool new products I came across! Just a heads up, this isn't an endorsement since I haven't tried them myself. I wish these had been around when I was caring for Norman—they look super interesting! I'm sharing them as examples of the new treatments I'm describing in this chapter.

### Cold Laser Therapy (LLLT):

Also known as low-level laser therapy (LLLT), this treatment uses focused light to reduce inflammation and pain in the joints. The light penetrates the skin and stimulates cellular activity, promoting healing and reducing inflammation. It is a non-invasive option that can help manage arthritis symptoms effectively, improving mobility and comfort for your dog. *Example Product: Dog Med Laser and Helopet*

### Hydrotherapy Equipment:

Although hydrotherapy is already mentioned under natural treatments, it's worth highlighting new at-home equipment. Hydrotherapy supports joint health by using water's buoyancy to minimize stress on painful joints and resistance to strengthen muscles. It's especially beneficial for dogs with severe arthritis, as the buoyancy of water supports their weight, making it easier for overweight dogs or those unable to exercise on land to move comfortably and safely. You can find hydrotherapy services at canine rehabilitation centers, pet hydrotherapy clinics, and some local veterinary clinics and larger animal hospitals. An example of new at-home equipment is the *Canine Underwater Treadmill by HydroWorx*.



## Physiotherapy:

Tailored physical therapy programs can help maintain muscle mass, improve joint function, and reduce pain. Techniques may include massage, stretching, and specific exercises designed to enhance mobility and minimize discomfort. Physiotherapy can also address compensatory issues in other parts of the body, ensuring a holistic approach to managing arthritis. *Example Product: Thera-Paw Support Wraps*

## PEMF (Pulsed Electromagnetic Field) Therapy:

PEMF therapy uses electromagnetic pulses to stimulate cells and tissues, promoting healing and reducing pain and inflammation. The Pets PEMF Pad is a non-pharmaceutical anti-inflammatory bed for pets that has been scientifically proven to alleviate pain and inflammation, allowing them to move more easily and comfortably. It can also speed up the healing process after injuries or surgeries, making it an ideal therapy for dogs with liver disease as well. An example product is the *Assisi Loop*.

## Librela (Bedinvetmab):

Librela is a new medicine approved by the FDA in 2023 to help control pain from osteoarthritis in dogs. It's a type of treatment called a monoclonal antibody. Librela works by blocking a protein called nerve growth factor (NGF) that plays a role in how pain is felt. Librela is administered as a monthly injection and has shown promising results in improving mobility and reducing pain. While generally safe, **it should be used with caution in dogs with severe liver disease.**

### **Warning: Librela (Bedinvetmab)**

#### **The Science Behind Librela:**

Librela is a medicine that helps stop a substance called nerve growth factor (NGF) from working in the joints. NGF is important because it sends pain signals to the brain when there's an injury or problem. By blocking NGF, Librela can help reduce pain in joints, which sounds good. However, blocking NGF in other parts of the body can be risky because NGF also helps repair and protect our nerves. If we stop NGF from doing its job everywhere, it could lead to other problems.

#### **Potential Risks:**

Blocking NGF, or nerve growth factor, can stop nerves from healing, which can cause them to weaken and lose their ability to function properly. This is especially important in older dogs, or geriatric dogs, because their bodies are already more fragile. When NGF is blocked, these dogs can experience serious problems. For example, they might become paralyzed, which means they



can't move parts of their body. They might also have trouble controlling their bladder, leading to incontinence, or the inability to hold in urine. Additionally, they may lose control over their limbs and organs, making it hard to walk or even perform basic functions. It's crucial to understand these effects so that we can take better care of our aging canine companions.

### **Reported Side Effects:**

- Sudden paralysis in the back legs or whole body
- Seizures
- Trouble walking, feeling dizzy, or stumbling
- Loss of control over bathroom needs
- Poor vision
- Damage to organs from too much cortisol
- Frequent urination and thirst (drinking a lot of water)
- Fast heartbeat, feeling restless, anxious, or unable to sleep, and changes in behavior
- Heart stopping
- Bleeding in the brain

### **Concerns:**

Many veterinarians are giving Librela injections to help with different types of pain, not just osteoarthritis, but that's concerning. Using it for "off label" treatments that it is not approved for is not safe. Librela can make osteoarthritis get worse quickly because dogs might not notice the harm happening to their joints. Similar drugs in humans were stopped because they caused serious side effects, including fast progression of osteoarthritis.

In 2024, Librela has only been available for a year, which isn't enough time to fully understand its long-term effects. So, it's important to be cautious before using this powerful new drug on your dog.

### **Horror Stories:**

There have been quite a few reports of serious reactions and even deaths happening shortly after the injection. Facebook groups like "Librela - The Truth," "Librela Experiences," "Librela Feedback and Reviews," and "Librela Class Action & Support" are sharing these stories.

  
**Important Considerations:**

This drug has a variable half-life on average of 19 days, which means side effects can stick around for weeks to months depending on the dog's metabolism and health condition. Some of those side effects, like paralysis and incontinence, might even be permanent.

**Recommendation:**

It's really important to consider the potential risks and side effects before thinking about using Librela for your dog. I suggest doing some thorough research and even consider getting more than one opinion about any concerns you might have. Remember to weigh the benefits against any possible risks, especially since your dog has liver disease or possibly other health issues.

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## Chapter 12: Medications to Avoid for Dogs with Liver Disease

### Introduction

Taking care of a liver dog means being careful about the medications they receive. Some meds can actually cause more harm to the liver or create extra complications. In this chapter, I'll list some of the medications that can impact the liver that you should know about.

### Medications to Avoid

Dogs with liver disease should avoid the following medications due to their potential to cause further liver damage or exacerbate existing liver conditions:

#### **Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs):**

- Carprofen (Rimadyl)
- Etodolac (EtoGesic)
- Deracoxib (Deramaxx)
- Ketoprofen
- Meloxicam (Metacam)
- Firocoxib (Previcox)
- Grapiprant (Galliprant)
- Buffered Aspirin
- Tylenol (Acetaminophen)
- Ibuprofen

#### **Corticosteroids:**

- Prednisone
- Prednisolone
- Dexamethasone

#### **Antibiotics:**

- Tetracycline
- Doxycycline
- Sulfonamides

#### **Anti-Epileptic Drugs:**

- Phenobarbital
- Primidone
- Valproate



### **Other Medications and Treatments to Avoid:**

- Thiacetarsamide (heartworm treatment)
- Ketoconazole (fungal treatment)
- Proin (incontinence)
- Methotrexate
- Azathioprine
- Methimazole
- Glucocorticoids (cortisone)
- Anthelmintics (deworming medication)
- Parasiticides (flea, tick, and deworming medication)

If your liver dog does need medication that affects the liver, it's important to work with your vet to check liver enzymes regularly with blood tests. This proactive plan can help find any problems early and make sure the treatment is working well.

Now that you know which medications to avoid, I want to give you an example of a holistic treatment plan that will help manage your dog's arthritis and liver disease effectively. In the next chapter, I bring everything I've discussed in this book together into a complete treatment plan.

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## Chapter 13: A Complete Treatment Plan

Creating a comprehensive treatment plan for your dog with arthritis and liver disease is essential to help them live comfortably for the rest of their life. This chapter will put everything together and give you a holistic approach that combines supplements, pain relief, nutritional support, natural therapies, and lifestyle tweaks. You'll be able to customize these strategies to meet your dog's unique needs.

### Arthritis Supplements

Incorporate supplements like glucosamine/chondroitin or Adequan to support joint health. These supplements help maintain cartilage and reduce inflammation, making it easier for your dog to move comfortably. Alternatively, you can choose an all-in-one joint supplement that combines multiple beneficial ingredients.

### Pain Relief

Use safe pain relievers such as MSM, Zylamend, SAM-e, or homeopathic remedies to manage discomfort. These options can help alleviate pain without putting additional strain on your dog's liver. A holistic or homeopathic veterinarian will be able to help you find the best pain relief strategy for your dog.

### Nutritional Supplements

Add beneficial supplements like Vitamin E, Vitamin C, Omega-3, and others to their diet. These supplements support overall health and can help reduce inflammation. Omega-3 fatty acids, in particular, are known for their anti-inflammatory properties and can be especially beneficial for dogs with arthritis.

### Natural Therapies

Explore acupuncture, chiropractic, hydrotherapy, acupressure or massage to provide additional relief and promote overall well-being. These therapies offer a multi-faceted approach to managing arthritis, promoting comfort, restoring mobility, and improving overall well-being. Many dogs find these treatments relaxing and enjoyable, making them a great addition to their care routine.



## New Therapies

Look at some of the new products and therapies that provide non-invasive, non-pharmaceutical treatments. These options are generally considered safer for dogs with liver disease, as they do not involve the ingestion of substances that could affect liver function. Examples include laser therapy, pulsed electromagnetic field therapy, and at-home hydrotherapy.

## Anti-Inflammatory Liver-Friendly Diet

Feed a fresh homemade liver-friendly diet tailored for weight control and enhanced with anti-inflammatory ingredients. This diet can help manage both arthritis and liver disease by providing essential nutrients while reducing inflammation.

## Low-Impact Exercise

Engage in low-impact daily exercise to maintain mobility without stressing the joints. Activities like gentle walks, swimming, or controlled play sessions can help keep your dog active and healthy. Regular exercise also supports weight management, which is crucial for dogs with arthritis.

## Comfort

Ensure your dog has comfortable bedding and other aids to make their daily life easier and more enjoyable. Orthopedic beds, ramps, and supportive harnesses can help your dog move around more comfortably and reduce strain on their joints.

The key to this comprehensive treatment plan is to adapt it to your dog's specific needs. This all-around holistic approach ensures that you provide the best possible care, giving you peace of mind as you help your dog live a happier and more comfortable life, even while dealing with arthritis and liver disease.

## Chapter 14: Reflections and Insights

### Looking Back

My healing journey with Norman taught me so much about the power of a holistic approach to health. This was important not only for taking care of Norman but also for keeping all of my dogs healthy over the past 20 years.

Ever since I had to go through the guilt of giving Norman Rimadyl, which destroyed his liver without me knowing the risks, I've become ultra-cautious about any medication that a vet prescribes. I always research before giving it to my dog. It's easy to do research now with tools like Google and Bing Copilot (AI).

The way I do this now is by specifically searching to see if the drug is processed by the liver or has side effects on liver enzymes. For example, you can simply type the name of the medication followed by "liver safety" or "liver side effects" into Google. This will show you important information about how the drug is broken down and any potential risks to the liver.

### Using AI Tools for Research

Now, I like to use the new (2024) AI tools like Bing Copilot to ask specific questions about the medication's impact on liver health and its serious side effects.

#### **Example Prompt>**

*"Can you provide detailed information about the potential liver-related and serious side effects of [Medication Name] when used to treat [Medical Condition] in dogs? My dog is [Age] years old and is currently taking [Other Medications]. Are there any specific risks or interactions I should be aware of, including liver-related side effects? Also, are there any safer alternatives, including natural and holistic options such as supplements?"*

#### **If you'd like a more holistic perspective, use this prompt>**

*"Can you investigate and provide a holistic veterinary perspective on the safety and efficacy of [Medication Name] for treating [Medical Condition] in dogs? Please include any potential side effects, interactions with other medications, and whether holistic veterinarians generally recommend its use. Additionally, provide natural and holistic alternatives if [Medication Name] is not recommended."*



Now that you have this knowledge, you can make informed choices and be the best advocate for your best friend and truly improve their quality of life.

## Final Thoughts

I know firsthand that caring for a dog with arthritis and liver disease can be challenging, but you're not alone. I've connected with so many amazing pet parents who've faced similar challenges and found ways to give their dogs the love and support they need to live happy, comfortable lives.

Remember, even small changes can make a big difference. Stay informed, be proactive, and never underestimate the power of your love and care. Don't hesitate to reach out for help if you need it, and keep learning and exploring new ways to care for your doggie.

**And most importantly, remember...**

**You Are An \*\*\*A-M-A-Z-I-N-G\*\*\* Doggie Mama/Daddy, and**

**You've Got This!**

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