

Mountain View Animal Hospital
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Masticatory Muscle Myositis

Your pet has been diagnosed as having Masticatory Muscle Myositis. MMM is an inflammatory condition affecting the muscles used for chewing. This condition is found within dogs of all ages and sexes.

SIGNS OF MASTICATORY MUSCLE MYOSITIS

Common signs shown by dogs with MMM are pain and abnormal movement of the jaw. Sometimes the dog will have difficulty opening its mouth to eat or play with toys or be in pain when it tries to do so. It may have trouble chewing or refuse to eat. The dog may exhibit chronic pain in its jaw, meaning that the pain is present for an extended length of time. Other dogs may show signs of acute, or isolated, instances of jaw pain. The owner may also notice that the dog's jaw muscles are swollen.

CAUSES OF MASTICATORY MUSCLE MYOSITIS

MMM is an autoimmune condition; it is caused by the animal's own immune system. The body's defenses attack the muscles in the jaw which results in inflammation and pain.

DIAGNOSIS OF MASTICATORY MUSCLE MYOSITIS

In order to diagnose your dog as having MMM, the veterinarian will do a series of tests. Once the veterinarian has observed symptoms such as swollen jaw, jaw pain, and difficult opening the mouth, she will need to perform other tests in order to confirm that your dog has MMM. Tests such as bloodwork to look at a particular enzyme, muscle biopsy, and a blood test that looks at antibodies against the muscle can be used to determine that your dog has MMM.

TREATMENT OF MASTICATORY MUSCLE MYOSITIS

For treatment of MMM, there are many options that your veterinarian may choose to use. If your dog is having extreme difficulty in eating, a liquid diet may be recommended. Your veterinarian may choose to put your dog on a medication referred to as a corticosteroid for treatment of MMM. It may be necessary to keep your animal on this medication for long term. In order to monitor your dog's condition, your veterinarian may ask that you return for a follow-up appointment in order to assure that your animal's condition is improving.