What's your dog trying to tell you?

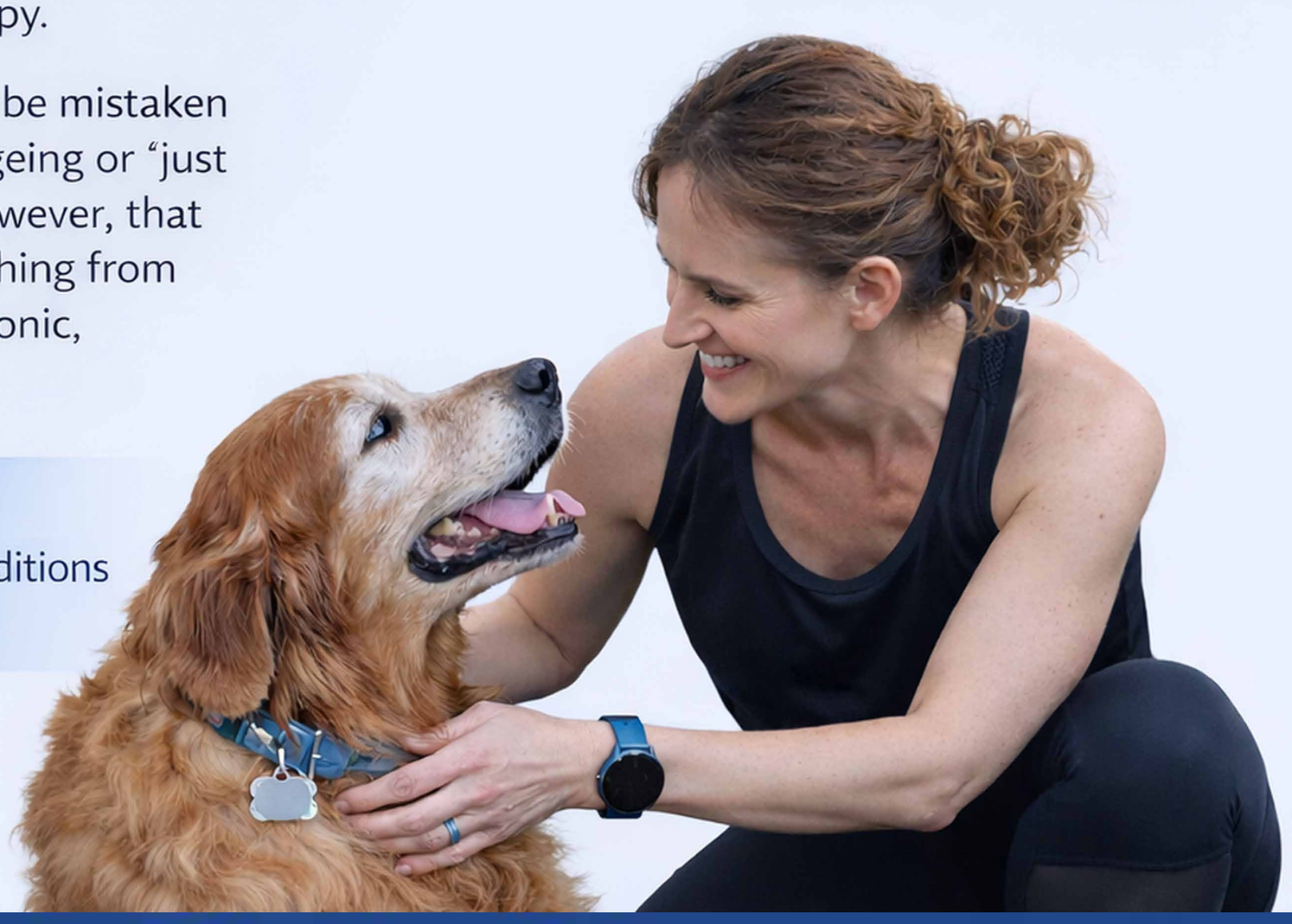
A guide to help you assess your dog for the viability of canine therapy.

AZ CANINE FITNESS

STRENGTH-FUNCTION-HYDROTHERAPY-MASSAGE

If you have noticed, or have concerns about, your dog's mobility and/or behaviour, you can easily classify your observations with the **5 Principles of Pain**, a useful aid for identifying symptoms of musculoskeletal conditions that could be helped by canine therapy.

The signs of muscular pain listed can be mistaken by some owners as simply signs of ageing or "just something they do". The reality is, however, that muscular pain can be caused by anything from normal activities of daily living to chronic, arthritic conditions.



What's next?

Just tick the severity of each of the conditions that apply to your dog and turn over.

● Sometimes ● Often

● Always

The 5 Principles of Pain

GAIT	POSTURE	ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING	BEHAVIOR	PERFORMANCE
Lame / limping / carrying a leg or paw ● ● ●	Coat changes / flicking up / dry area ● ● ●	Struggling to get up or down from sofa, stairs, car ● ● ●	Reluctance to be petted / /groomed / examined ● ● ●	**Agility dogs** – pole knocking, weave and/or contacts issues, lack of drive, measuring ● ● ●
Reduced range of movement ● ● ●	Kyphosis (hunching) / Lordosis (swayback) ● ● ●	Not settling, pacing at night time ● ● ●	Disinterested in life / isolating themselves / depressed ● ● ●	**Gun dogs** – early onset fatigue, retrieval issues ● ● ●
Stiff when moving ● ● ●	Twitching, or 'shivery' skin ● ● ●	Weakness in back legs ● ● ●	Self mutilation e.g., nibbling their hind area ● ● ●	**Canicross** – early onset fatigue, reluctance to wear harness, not pulling ● ● ●
Slowing down on walks ● ● ●	Inexplicable tremors ● ● ●	General signs of ageing ● ● ●	Lick granuloma, e.g., excessive licking of wrist ● ● ●	**Obedience** – change on work positions e.g., down stay / sendaway ● ● ●
Abduction or adduction (throwing a leg) ● ● ●	Tail carriage = up, swimmers tail ● ● ●	Struggling / slowing down on walks ● ● ●	Snapping when touched or tower dried ● ● ●	**Flyball** – Turning wide on box, missing/avoiding jumps ● ● ●
Single tracking ● ● ●	Neck / back / shoulder issues ● ● ●	Difficulty rising from lying down ● ● ●	Snapping at other dogs as a pre-warning for them to stay away ● ● ●	All disciplines: any deviation from natural conformation ● ● ●
Pacing ● ● ●	Uneven nail wear ● ● ●	Slipping / unbalanced on flooring ● ● ●	Anxiety ● ● ●	
Hopping/skipping ● ● ●	Hip or stifle rotation (toes and/or stifle knee pointing out) ● ● ●	Lying down to eat ● ● ●	Frequent rolling on back ● ● ●	
Lack of reach or drive ● ● ●	Down on the wrist ● ● ●			
Crabbing ● ● ●				

Has your dog been diagnosed with any orthopedic issues?

Diseased joints rely on the extra muscular support which, in itself, is likely to mean increased secondary pain.
For fully effective management of chronic pain, all areas of associated muscular dosfunction must be addressed.

☐ Please tick, the relevant boxes...

- ☐ Osteoarthritis
- ☐ Cruciate ligament tear
- ☐ Spondylosis
- ☐ OCD
- ☐ My dog is pre-surgery
- ☐ Hip dysplasia
- ☐ Elbow dysplasia
- ☐ Luxating patella
- ☐ Previous break / fracture
- ☐ My dog is post-surgery