



Better Options. Better Care.

ph 608.845.0002 | fax 608.845.2200
edingersurgicaloptions.com

FRAGMENTED MEDIAL CORONOID PROCESS

What is Fragmented Medial Coronoid Process (FMCP)?

A fragmented medial coronoid process (FMCP) is a developmental abnormality in which a piece of bone (the medial coronoid process of the ulna) is either malformed or has separated from the ulna and is floating free in the elbow joint. This typically results from a poor fit between the major components that make up the elbow joint (ulna trochlear notch, humeral trochlea, and radial head). As a result, the cartilage of the elbow is irritated leading to the development of inflammation, pain, and stiffness eventually resulting in osteoarthritis. More degenerative changes in the cartilage will occur over months to years with continued abnormal fit between joint components and continued irritation by a free fragment. This condition is commonly seen in large breed dogs (Bernese Mountain Dogs, Labrador Retrievers, and Golden Retrievers), although it can happen in any breed, and very often both elbows are affected. The first signs of forelimb lameness tend to occur in younger dogs that are five to seven months of age. The lameness is usually more severe after periods of heavy activity or periods of prolonged rest. Lameness may not be obvious if both front legs are affected.

Diagnosis

During physical exam the most common findings are forelimb lameness, elbow swelling, and pain on manipulation of the elbows. X-rays often show arthritic changes and in some cases the fragment can be seen. CT scan of the elbows is the most thorough way to identify elbow changes prior to surgery.

Treatment

Surgical intervention is recommended early in the disease process to decrease the progression of osteoarthritis and increases the patient's long-term quality of life. The procedure consists of arthroscopic examination of the joint followed by removal of the fragmented coronoid process and removal of damaged cartilage. A padded bandage is applied to the operated limb after surgery to minimize swelling and discomfort. Controlled activity is required for 4-6 weeks post op. Medical management of FMCP consists of anti-inflammatory medications, controlled activity, weight management and physical therapy. Long-term prognosis is dependent on the amount of elbow osteoarthritis prior to surgery and lifelong management. If the condition is corrected early, the prognosis is generally good. If surgery is not performed until after significant osteoarthritic changes have occurred, the prognosis is poorer. Even when surgically corrected early, dogs will develop some degree of osteoarthritis. These dogs may require anti-inflammatory medications and physical therapy later in life. Untreated osteoarthritis will progressively worsen and will cause a decreased joint range of motion and increased lameness over time.

