

Purina & Sports Medicine Veterinarians Collaborate to Help Canine Athletes

Emerging Specialty Focuses on Rehabilitation and Recovery for Active Dogs

GRAY SUMMIT, Mo., Oct. 6, 2016 /[PRNewswire](#)/ -- Canine athletes are leaping to new heights, running faster times and retrieving with greater endurance, with the help of proper nutrition and new learnings about veterinary sports medicine. Dogs that fetch balls and bumpers in the backyard and those that are our walking and running companions benefit as well from advances in sports medicine and rehabilitation.

The Purina Canine Sports Medicine Symposium, held Sept. 30 to Oct. 1 at Purina Farms in Gray Summit, Missouri, brought together 30 top veterinary sports medicine and rehabilitation specialists from across the country to share ideas, present the latest research, and brainstorm innovative ways to work together. The group also shared ideas with Purina veterinarian and research scientists, and took part in panel discussions with competitors of the Purina Pro Plan Incredible Dog Challenge National Finals and AKC Master National Retriever event, which coincided with the symposium. They offered competitors tips on nutrition, training and conditioning, and rehabbing from injuries.

Event coordinator RuthAnn Lobos, DVM, CCRT, Purina Senior Veterinary Communications Manager, says, "Purina has been a proud partner of the American College of Veterinary Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation since its inception. It's exciting to witness new relationships being formed as a result of the symposium, with great discussions and provocative questions being asked and a laser focus on increasing the level of care of canine athletes and active pet dogs."

The 10 presentations included new learnings related to:

- The use of technology on smartphones that allow the recording of a dog's performance and gaiting movement. Playing this back in slow motion is a helpful diagnostic tool to detect signs of pain as well as to monitor a dog's progress after surgery and rehabilitation
- Thermal imaging can be used to detect inflammation in soft-tissue structures and compensatory muscular activity. Bruising, infections, frostbite, and harness rubbing are visual as well
- Regenerative medicine using platelet-rich plasma and stem-cell therapy as a multimodal treatment combined with rehabilitation therapy in treating soft-tissue injuries from repetitive forces on tendons and ligaments
- Nutritionally maintaining performance in older working dogs to help support their physical performance. Targeted nutrients that can make a difference include omega-3 fatty acids from fish oil to promote joint health and mobility, and medium-chain triglycerides, when added to the daily diet of dogs 7 and older, to promote alertness and mental sharpness
- The importance of having a specialized plan for the rehabilitation of canine athletes and active dogs depending on their sport or activity and level of competition. Owners of sporting dogs commonly are fully involved in their dog's recovery process, so it is helpful to give them specific at-home exercises with details about duration, frequency and intensity

Sharing findings of a randomized, prospective clinical trial of 48 dogs, Wendy Baltzer, DVM, PhD, DACVS, DACVSMR, CCRP, Associate Professor of Small Animal Surgery and Director of Canine Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation at Oregon State University in Corvallis, reported that feeding [Purina® Pro Plan® Veterinary Diets JM Joint Mobility® Canine Formula](#) in conjunction with rehabilitation had a positive effect on dogs recovering after surgery for cranial cruciate ligament injury. "We found that the combination of this diet and rehabilitation helped to improve the force dogs exerted on the affected limb, compared to dogs in other study groups," she says. "JM is rich in omega-3 fatty acids and protein."

This research, which was funded by Purina, will be published in January 2017 in the *Journal of the*

American Veterinary Medical Association.

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