

# Pets with Dr. Jyl

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**Dr. Jyl** can be seen each Wednesday on the KOVR 13 News at Noon.

**PAIN RELIEF FOR PETS (1/31/01)**

Dr. Jyl stopped by Wednesday to discuss pain relief for pets. Assisting Doctor Jyl was Mark and Julie Cunningham's dog, Willie.

Because animals react to pain differently than humans do, it was once thought that they don't feel as much pain. Recent work has shown beneficial aspects of pain control for animals. Adequate pain therapy speeds up recovery and return to normal function.

Owners are in the best position to know whether their pets are in pain because they know the pets' daily behavior. Slight changes in behavior are often the first clue that animals are in pain. Pets may not eat as well, may not move as well (e.g., up stairs or into cars), may hide more, and may cry or whine in an unusual way. Be astute. Many pets, especially

cats, are very stoic when in pain.



Willie belongs to the Cunninghams of Lincoln.



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What we do to control pain may range from administration of analgesic medications to physical therapy or even acupuncture. New medicinal therapies have fewer side effects than older therapies. Hydrotherapy, massage, laser light, magnets, electro-acupuncture, and electrical energy can also aid in pain relief. Often a combination of modalities may be used. Many of these newer therapies are only now beginning to be evaluated in veterinary patients.

The veterinarian's first step in treating pain is always to identify the source of the pain.

Knowing the location and type of pain will aid the veterinarian in treating the animal. Veterinarians may use some of the same human drugs sold over-the-counter to control pain in animals. However, dosages are very different for animals. A very small amount of improperly dosed drug can cause severe toxicity or death in a pet.

Therefore, if you suspect that your pet is in pain, don't try to treat it yourself; make an appointment with your veterinarian.