

How to keep your dog fit, healthy and happy.

Try these 10 simple exercises from The Animal Medical Center's Rehabilitation and Fitness Service and see the results they can bring to both you and your pet.



1. Always give your dog a proper “warm up”.

Walking is an excellent, all-purpose warm-up prior to exercise, practice or competition. Start walking at a comfortable pace, then move into a trot for 5-10 minutes. To build endurance, we recommend 20 minutes or more of moderate intensity exercise such as trotting or swimming.



2. “Stretch up”, then “take a bow”.

Encourage your pet to stand on hind legs and stretch his front paws upward. If this is too difficult, have your dog rest his front paws on you. Later, when your pet stands after sleeping and stretches - by fully extending his front feet and raising his rear end - praise and reward him. Both of these positions provide needed spine extension.



3. “Sit up and beg”.

Note: avoid this exercise if your dog has a history of back problems or if your dog is currently overweight.



4. Do the “roll over”.

A) Start with your dog in the down/stay position, and hold a treat or toy near the nose as a lure. In a clockwise circular motion, move the lure to the side of one shoulder, luring the head.

B) After repeating and rewarding that motion, pull the lure up to the spine. When the dog begins to lose his balance, praise him.

C) With practice, he will roll over onto his back and complete the roll over.



5. Try some “paw power”.

Give your dog a “High Five”! The dog will reach up with one paw. Repeat 2 to 3 times on each side. This movement exercises shoulders, front legs and elbows.



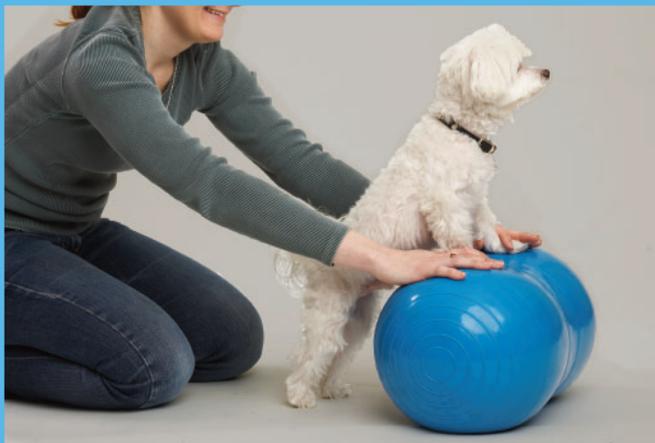
6. Join in a “tug of war”.

Encourage the dog to pull straight back—not side to side. A useful tip: hold the tug straight to the floor as this works the muscles in the front legs as well as the hind legs.



7. “Rock on”!

Grab a couch cushion, rocking chair, air mattress or commercial “bosu”—anything you can rock by hand. Stand the dog on whatever you’ve chosen and slowly rock. The dog will auto-matically shift his weight to correct balance with every motion.



8. Make your dog athletically “inclined”.

Get your pet to lift his front limbs from the ground by using a Physioball, going upstairs or even “dancing”. These exercises will strengthen the hind limbs. Repeat this exercise with the rear legs to strengthen the front limbs.



9. “Stand on three legs”.

Lift one of your pet's legs off the ground. If it's the front leg, bring the leg forward. If it's the rear leg, lift it back wards. Support the leg lightly so your dog cannot use your grip to help support himself. This exercise helps to improve weight bearing and strength.



10. Do the “happy butt scratch dance”.

Vigorously scratch the top of your dog's rear end. Most dogs find this stimulating and will “dance” from side to side with the rear legs, shifting their weight and strengthening these muscles.



The AMC's Rehabilitation and Fitness Service

The only facility of its kind in
New York City

Our new, state-of-the-art suite for companion animals and exotics has been fully equipped with underwater- and land-based treadmills, a hydrotherapy tub and much, much more. In addition, our staff will be happy to formulate a specialized program for your pet, including diet and home exercise recommendations.

These services can be particularly beneficial to pets that are:

- Elderly
- Arthritic
- Suffering from endocrine diseases such as diabetes, Cushings, hypothyroid, and others
- Neurologically impaired
- Overweight
- Athletic

To speak directly to The Rehabilitation and Fitness Service or to make an appointment, call (212) 329-8610.

Contact Information

To set up an appointment at
The Animal Medical Center,
call (212) 838-7053, from 9AM to 10PM,
seven days a week.

To speak directly to
The AMC's Rehabilitation and Fitness Service,
call (212) 329-8610.

In case of emergency, bring your pet directly
to The Animal Medical Center.
Your pet will be examined and cared for by
one of our veterinarians.

If you are a veterinarian making a referral, call
The Referral Office at
(212) 329-8890 or (212) 329-8758.

For general information, call (212) 838-8100
or log on to: www.amcny.org

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