

## Simba the German Shepherd



Simba is a 5 year old German Shepherd dog who has been visiting Oakhill since he was a puppy. In June 2018, he was diagnosed with hip dysplasia. This is a common condition affecting German Shepherds, Labrador Retrievers and Border Collies amongst other breeds.

The hip socket is more shallow than usual, and the top of the femur (thigh bone) becomes abnormally shaped and doesn't sit well within the socket. The resulting joint instability can eventually lead to painful arthritis. It was recommended that Simba start joint supplements and hydrotherapy to build muscle and maintain mobility and strength in his hind legs to reduce the likelihood of arthritis in the future.

In May 2020, Simba became uncomfortable on his left hindlimb. He was diagnosed with disease of the stifle (knee) joint. As Simba was overweight, the pressure put through his hindlimbs was significant. It was advised that he lose weight to reduce the burden on his joints.

Simba's owner kept a food diary for one week, so that the nurse could calculate how many calories he was eating compared to how many his body required. The nurse then advised a low-fat food and exactly what size portions he required to lose weight healthily. Simba's owner started the new diet, being careful to reduce any further treats given.



Simba was regularly weighed, and has lost 20% of his bodyweight. As you can see, he looks fantastic! His owner reports that he's now full of life, dragging her to be taken for walks and is building up muscle really well at his hydrotherapy sessions.

We're all so proud of Simba's progress. If your pet is overweight, our nurses would be happy to talk over the phone about what can be done to help.

Losing weight reduces the burden on joints and helps pets to live longer.