

Cold Water Tail

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What is cold water tail?

Also known as swimtail, broken tail, dead tail and broken wag, this is a painful but generally short-term affliction, most commonly occurring amongst the sporting dog breeds, such as Setters, pointers and Labrador and Golden Retrievers.



What are the signs or symptoms?

It appears to be caused by damage to the tail muscles, leading to the tail either hanging limply from the base, or perhaps from further along giving it a kinked appearance. This can be very painful and sometimes distressing for the dog, who may find it difficult to even sit without pain.

The condition may be brought on by working an underconditioned dog too hard, swimming or bathing your dog in cold water, or putting it through a heavy exercise session where the tail is used a lot. If your dog has an incidence of this limp tail syndrome, it is possible that there will be recurrences at a later date, or that it may in fact be restricted to just a one-off event.

How is it treated?

The tail will generally recover with a few days of rest, although in some cases healing may be accelerated by some anti-inflammatory treatment by a veterinarian.

How can you avoid buying a dog with cold water tail?

There is no indication that this affliction is inherited. It is also only a relatively minor problem, however it is worth being aware of as it can be quite a painful event for your dog.