

# Animal Rehab Division



## Getting Started

Follow this guide to getting started in Animal Rehab

## Animal Athletes

Canadian dogs and horses participate in a number of different sports. How many can you identify?

## Case History

Here's an example of how rehab can get our animal companions back on track!

## Welcome New Members!

Let us introduce you to the world of animal rehab...how to get started and what to expect!

Welcome to the Animal Rehab Division of the Canadian Physiotherapy Association. We are pleased to have you join us and we'd like to extend an invitation to learn a little more about animal rehab with this introductory newsletter. Working with animals can be a truly amazing and incredibly satisfying experience.

Animal rehab allows you to use your knowledge of human physiotherapy in a completely new way, and you will be amazed at how similar our physiology is to our animal companions.



Make use of your skills yet embark on a completely new path in your physiotherapy career! Animal rehab will get you excited about your profession and motivate you to learn more about providing your best friend with a higher quality of life. What could be better than that?



# So you want to get into animal rehab?



Animal Rehabilitation is more than just trying out your human techniques on animals. It involves an in-depth education system consisting of anatomy, physiology, common injuries & surgeries, behavioral issues, physical examination, and treatment techniques.

## EDUCATION

A Diploma or a Certificate in animal rehabilitation is required to practice animal rehab in Canada. Here are the North American links:

The Animal Rehabilitation Division (ARD) of the CPA. The ARD offers a Diploma in Canine Rehab. These courses are provided exclusively to physiotherapists.

[www.animalptcanada.com](http://www.animalptcanada.com)

The Canine Rehabilitation Institute (Florida, Maryland, Colorado) offers a Canine Certificate program for physiotherapists and veterinarians.

[www.caninerehabinstitute.com](http://www.caninerehabinstitute.com)

The Equine Rehabilitation Institute (Florida) offers an Equine Certificate program for physiotherapists and veterinarians.

[www.equinerehabinstitute.com](http://www.equinerehabinstitute.com)

The University of Tennessee offers Canine and Equine Certificate programs for physiotherapists and veterinarians.

[www.canineequinerehab.com](http://www.canineequinerehab.com)

## ARD COURSES

The Animal Rehab Division offers 3 courses leading to a Diploma in Canine Rehabilitation.

### **Introduction to the Canine Patient**

Independent Study Program  
Anatomy, physiology, common conditions, common injuries, gait patterns, medications, and practice issues. *Available Anytime.*

### **Introduction to Canine Rehabilitation**

Functional anatomy & palpation, canine behavior, hands-on assessment and treatment techniques, orthopedics, neurology, manual therapy, exercise programs.

### **Advanced Canine Rehabilitation**

Peripheral joint and spinal assessment, neurologic evaluation and treatment, advanced exercise, sports injuries and surgical descriptions.

### **Diploma Exams**

Case study, Written Exam, Clinical Placement

Check our website for course dates in your area. [www.animalptcanada.com](http://www.animalptcanada.com)

## NEW EQUINE PROGRAM

The ARD is happy to announce that our new Equine Rehabilitation Program is now up and trotting!

### **Introduction to the Equine Patient**

Independent Study Program  
Anatomy, physiology, common conditions, common injuries, gait patterns, medications, and practice issues. *Available Anytime.*

### **Introduction to Equine Rehabilitation**

Functional anatomy and palpation, equine behaviour and hands-on musculoskeletal and neurological assessment.



*Proprioception Exercises Down Under!*



## Animal Rehab Internationally

These countries currently have animal physiotherapy associations:

Canada, Great Britain, The Netherlands, South Africa, Sweden, Spain, Finland, Australia, USA, Switzerland, Ireland and Belgium.

### The NAME GAME

You may have noticed that we continually refer to the term Animal "Rehabilitation" rather than Animal "Physiotherapy". This is with good intention. The terms "Physiotherapy, Physical Therapy, Physiotherapist and Physical Therapist" are all protected terms by the respective regulatory Physiotherapy Colleges. This has the desired effect of precluding a non-physiotherapist from performing physiotherapy, but these terms are also protected under human legislation, which means that they are only applicable to human medicine. So, although you may be a registered physiotherapist, animal treatments fall outside the provincial Physical Therapy Acts, and therefore may not be referred to as physiotherapy.

The ARD has been battling this issue for many years, and changing legislation is not an easy task! We feel that it is important that the public understand that we are fully licensed "human" physiotherapists who have taken additional and specific training to become certified as animal practitioners. When dealing with the owners of our animal patients, we always make sure that they understand that we are licensed human physiotherapists first. You would be surprised how many owners will start seeing you for their own treatment after you help their pet!

### But HOW do you treat an animal?

Animal physiology and anatomy is very close to humans. So much so that most human physiotherapy techniques work just as well on our animal patients as they do on our human patients! Here's a sample of techniques that cross the species barrier:

Joint glides, mobilization and manipulation  
Mobilization with movement (Mulligan technique)  
Manual traction  
Acupuncture/Dry Needling (IMS)  
Modalities (EMS, US, Laser)  
Exercise!

Heat/Ice  
Bracing/Splinting  
Taping/Tensoring  
Carts (wheelchairs)

Cool, eh?



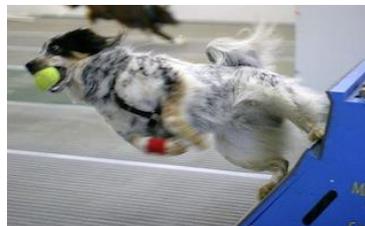
# So, you want to treat canine athletes?



Canine athletes compete in a multitude of sports in Canada. These amazing animals bring strength, endurance, determination, patience, agility, passion and pure joy to their sports. They also sustain a number of sports injuries! From muscle tears and ligament ruptures, to overuse injuries and turf toe, they require a lot of rehab!



See if you can match the picture to the sport:  
Agility, Flyball, Skijouring, Mushing, Field Trials, Hunting, Schutzhund, Lure Coursing, Dock Diving, Skateboarding, Track Racing, Search & Rescue, Carting, Freestyle Dancing, and Herding.





# EQUINE ATHLETES



Can you find these equine sports?  
Dressage, Barrel Racing, Pulling, Reining, Eventing, Sulky Racing, Polo, Show Jumping, Rodeo, Cattle Penning, Hunting, Racing, Roping





## HELPING HANK

Hank is a 3 yr. old male Black Lab who has severe OA in both hips with a history of congenital hip dysplasia. Hank's owner, Linda, first noticed problems when he was 2. He stopped wanting to play with the ball, started to have some problems on the stairs, and was very sore when rising. Linda took Hank to see his vet, and x-rays showed significant hip problems bilaterally. Hank was started on pain medication and referred to rehab.

On initial examination, Hank was very roached through the spine (holding the back in a kyphotic position), he had a short, choppy stride (to avoid hip extension), and had spasm and signs of pain on palpation of both iliopsoas muscles. He could not put his hind feet flat on the floor, and had atrophy of the quads and hamstrings.

Initial treatment involved acupuncture to specific points to help hip and back pain (GB29, GB30, UB40, UB60, GV3, GV4, UB22, UB23, GV14, ST36), EMS to the iliopsoas bilaterally, and an exercise program focusing on hind leg strength, core control, and proprioception.

Linda saw a huge improvement in Hank after the first treatment. After 3 treatments he had a longer stride, had no trouble with the stairs and was playing ball again. His spine was straight and his feet were in a normal position when standing.

## A Case History



It has been 3 months since Hank started rehab, and he is no longer taking any pain medication. Hank has a rehab treatment once per month, where he receives acupuncture, EMS, and exercise progressions.

Hank is taking glucosamine supplements and he has been assessed as a candidate for stem cell therapy (a relatively new technique where the patient's own stem cells are injected back into the affected joints to create a new cartilaginous lining).

Possible surgeries in Hank's future could include total hip replacements or femoral head excisions for pain control. At the present time, our rehab goal is to help keep Hank medication free, continue to strengthen his hind legs, and to avoid surgery. We want him to enjoy life and play like a young dog.

Hank is presently doing very well and is ready to start with some more challenging exercises on the physio ball (yes, really!) Watch for our "How's Hank?" updates in the ARD newsletter, and follow his rehab progress.

With life long exercise, good nutrition, weight management and intermittent rehab, Hank will have a good chance at a full and pain-free life.

### Hank's Early Exercise Program:

Cookies at the hip (weight shifting and spinal mobility)



Alternate 2 leg stand (proprioception and balance)



Front legs on the ball (hip extension stretching, proprioception, abdominal and hind leg strength)



Starting to get interested?  
Learn more about the  
Animal Rehab Division at  
[www.animalptcanada.com](http://www.animalptcanada.com)

## Acupuncture

This pony is receiving an acupuncture treatment in the comfort of his own home.



This rabbit responded very well to her acupuncture (just in time for Easter!)



## Bracing/Taping

Creating a little control for an unstable goat!



## Exercise

There are many ways to get an animal to exercise; you just need a little imagination!



## Manual Therapy

Improving feline hip extension and canine spinal mobility.



## Sports Injuries

Here is an example of an acute muscle tear. This whippet was competing in flyball when the right adductor tore. The injury resolved within a few weeks. This dog is part of a flyball team training to break the world team flyball record!



## Electrotherapy

Ultrasound treatment for an equine foreleg injury.





# Animal Rehab

Be at the forefront of an emerging and advanced area of physiotherapy practice.

New research, new tools, new techniques... all on the horizon. Do you have the vision?

Come, Watch, Join!

## Getting Started

Well all of this information is interesting of course, but how do you really start to practice in animal rehab? Education is first and foremost, but then what? Everyone in animal rehab has a different story; some were always involved with animals, and others just stumbled onto it. The common denominator is a passion for animals, a passion for physio, and just plain hard work.

We encourage anyone with an interest in animal rehab to find a mentor in your area. The ARD website can help direct you, and spending time with someone who is already in the business is incredibly helpful.

Even before starting on your animal rehab journey, meet some vets in your area to talk to them about it. Animal rehab has become the hot topic around the feed bins in the barns and in the veterinary clinics, and you can bet on your local vets being very interested in what you're doing. They will become your referral base, so keep them informed.

Once you have some knowledge, start giving some talks to your local animal clubs. These are your future clients, and they are going to be VERY interested in what you have to say. Today's pet owner is a little savvier, and expects their animals to be able to access the same services they do. Owners are generally less inclined towards medication, and more interested in a proactive approach to health.

Continue to spend time with other physios who are treating animals. If there is no one in your area, travel somewhere where you can get some hands on experience. It will help to hone your new skills and you can pick up loads of tips about the business side of things. Any of the ARD executives would be happy to have you hang with them for a few days!

Most physios have a dual practice; the majority of their time is still spent with human patients, but they have the added benefit of treating animals. It's a great combination and you will find that you look forward to your animal days with great anticipation.

So sit on the floor, get your face licked and enjoy your profession!

Are you a pet owner?

Even if animal rehab is not a career path that you think you're going to choose, a little bit of knowledge can go a long way in helping you to keep your own animals healthier and happier. Consider taking the independent study course from the ARD to give you some information on canine anatomy, medications, common injuries and behaviors that may help you with your own animals. You will start to look at your dog a little differently, and who knows, it may just wet your appetite for more!

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Finding the "TRIGGER" Points!