

### LASER THERAPY – A NEW HOPE

*Sue was alarmed when her Great Dane puppy, Beau, became lethargic and developed swollen legs that were hot to the touch. At just five months old, the pup was diagnosed with hypertrophic osteodystrophy (HOD), a painful bone disease that can occur in fast-growing large and giant breeds.*

*It can be crippling—in certain cases, a puppy would have to be euthanized. I had this big puppy who was in so much pain. I was like, ‘Just fix him!’”*

Fortunately, Sue’s veterinarian developed a treatment protocol that included cold laser therapy. Cold lasers stimulate the body’s cells to promote healing and alleviate pain. After three or four laser therapy treatments, Beau’s condition was completely resolved.

Beaux is just one of a growing number of pets who have benefitted from laser therapy, particularly over the last decade as the technology has evolved. Laser therapy causes many physiological and biochemical processes to occur. It stimulates the release of endorphins, causes vasodilation, and promotes lymphatic flow, which brings more blood to the area and flushes out inflammatory mediators and swelling, and accelerates tissue repair by increasing the rate of cell division and activating cells needed for repair.

Laser therapy is a valuable pain management tool, particularly for older dogs with arthritis who are starting to lose the use of their back legs, or those with compromised livers that prevent them from being able to take pain medication. It is a great option for cats as well, since there are fewer pain control options considered safe for them. Therapy lasers are also useful in treating exotic animals that may not take medication easily.

Laser “dosage” is adjusted based on the pet’s weight, skin color, and hair coat length, as well as the medical issue and area to be treated. Therapy lasers emit a pleasant warming sensation and most patients seem to relax and enjoy their sessions. Typically, multiple sessions are most effective, so at SunShine Animal Hospital, we offer special packages to achieve the best results.

*It is noninvasive and can be very beneficial.*

