

Cross-sectional study of the prevalence and clinical features of osteoarthritis in 100 cats.

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Abstract

To assess clinical signs and relevance of osteoarthritis (OA) in cats, the radiographic prevalence of OA in the appendicular skeleton of 100 client-owned cats (≥ 6 years old) was assessed. Possible associations between radiographic OA, clinical locomotor system examination, and owner-perceived behavioural changes were evaluated. OA was most prevalent in the shoulders, elbows, hips and tarsal joints with 61% of cats having OA in at least one joint and 48% in more than one joint. Overall, clinical examination of the larger peripheral joints had the highest sensitivity and specificity for radiographic OA. Regression analysis showed age to be related to OA ($P = 0.002$), as were decreased mobility and grooming ($P = 0.008$), although there was a correlation with age. Finally, increased inappropriate elimination was associated with OA ($P = 0.046$). It was concluded that the prevalence of OA in cats is strikingly high and increases with age. OA in cats seems to be associated with behavioural changes.

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