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Tripawd Tips for Using Wheelchairs and Carts

Posted by [jerry](#) on Tuesday, February 8th 2011

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Are you thinking about a wheel chair for your three legged pal?



If so, you'll want to read this brief interview with our favorite canine rehab veterinarian Dr. Jessica Waldman, VMD, CVA, CCRT, co-founder of [California Animal Rehabilitation Center](#) in Los Angeles.

We asked Dr. Waldman when and how a wheel chair or cart can benefit a Tripawd and how it should be used. Here's what she had to say:

Under what circumstances are carts appropriate for a Tripawd?

Carts are appropriate if the pet has severe compensatory issues or severe pain and therefore dysfunction with mobility. This should be considered after appropriate pain management, rehabilitation, and acupuncture.

Rehabilitation veterinarians or physical therapists* can aid in this decision and in measurements and fittings for the cart.

If the pet is unable to walk comfortably or without rest for more than 30 feet after these other approaches have been tried, a cart may be acceptable.

(*Qualified rehabilitation therapists have the initials CCRT: Certified Canine Rehabilitation Therapist or CCRP: Certified Canine Rehabilitation Practitioner after their name. To find one, visit the [Canine Rehabilitation Institute](#) or the [University of Tennessee Animal Rehabilitation program website](#).



What are benefits and drawbacks of using a cart with a

Tripawd?

Carts can be helpful to increase mobility, but a pet that uses a cart must use it in moderation (starting with just a minute or two at a time a few times daily.)

It is also important for owners to know that pets may do short walks (I would always limit to 15-20 minutes maximum) in carts, but that they cannot lie down in a cart and shouldn't because it stresses their back.

Carts are really just a walking aid. Carts do not replace the need for strengthening, range of motion, or flexibility issues.

Are there steps can a human take to avoid needing a cart for their Tripawd?

LOTS!! Rehab, exercise restriction is key, acupuncture, pain management, strengthening!!!

What kinds of qualifications/experience should a human look for in a company that makes carts?

Good question. Reputation, experience. Check the Better Business Bureau. Ask: Do they make rear wheel carts only or both front and rear limb carts (meaning, the more variety they have the more understanding they have)? Do they provide carts with counterbalance?

How do you know if a cart is properly fitted?

Hard to say, we have physical therapists do this because it isn't easy to explain. The dog needs to be in "as normal an anatomic position" as possible.

Many thanks to Dr. Waldman and [California Animal Rehabilitation Center](#) for helping us bring this valuable information to you. If you are lucky enough to live nearby, be sure to [visit Dr. Waldman's incredible facility](#) and see how her staff can help your Tripawd dog stay strong and live hoppy!

Check out [Tripawd Daisy and her Eddie's Wheels Cart](#):



For more information about rehabilitation therapy, wheel chairs and wheel carts for three legged dogs, please see our previous news stories:

- [Canine Rehabilitation Tips from CARE](#)
- [Doggon Wheelchairs for Tripawds](#)
- [Eddie's Wheels Makes Wheelchairs for Front and Rear Amputee Dogs](#)


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
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1.  [Tracy & Maggie](#) says:
[February 8, 2011 at 6:02 pm](#)

What great information guys! And from my favorite Dr. Waldman!! Thanks for the info!

Tracy, Maggie's Mom

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- o  [jerry](#) says:
[February 12, 2011 at 3:06 pm](#)

Awww shucks! Thanks Tracy & Maggie, we're so glad you like it!

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