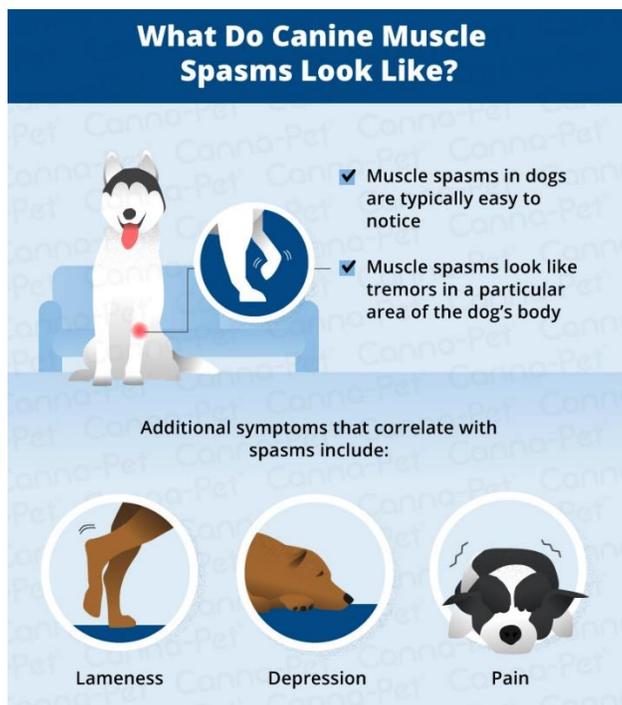


Muscle Spasms and Tremors in Dogs Post Massage

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During my Petmassage training my labradoodle Remi began experiencing a tremor or muscle spasm in his left deltoid area. When palpating the area, the muscle was in a fast twitch state the was continuous. I did not know where to begin to find the cause of the tremor. The class, however, taught me the importance of the light touch, palpation, and breath in a PetMassage session. Using these techniques, it allowed me to articulate the symptoms and provide an assessment. This allowed me to observe the tremor looking at Remi's whole body and patterns and not just his deltoid. The conclusion I came to was that the tremor could have been part of Remington's healing crisis.



So, what are muscle spasms or tremors and how do they affect a dog? Involuntary muscle trembling is any repetitive muscle movement that is impossible for the animal to control. It can affect a single, isolated limb, or be a generalized movement that includes the entire body. It can happen when a dog is at rest or in movement. The trembling may be only a few seconds in duration, or it may last for an extended period. Very severe tremors can make it difficult for a dog to eat or stand and may result in serious complications if not treated immediately.

This is usually a result of chemical and neurological imbalance rather than weakness in the muscles. There can be many contributing factors including hereditary, environmental, and age-related issues. As well as being distressing to the dog, this may interfere with normal motor functions, and in very severe cases can be life-threatening. [Involuntary Muscle Trembling in Dogs - Symptoms, Causes, Diagnosis, Treatment, Recovery, Management, Cost \(wagwalking.com\)](#) © 2021 Wag Labs, Inc. All rights

Remington has periodically had a limp in his left forearm after exercise or a long walk. It would last a few days and then be gone. So, I did some digging on what can cause muscle tremors.

Most tremors are the result of a chemical or neurological imbalance in the brain. These imbalances can be caused by many different things.

- **Hereditary**

Many types of hereditary conditions can cause tremors. One of the most well-known is Generalized Tremor Syndrome which is the result of a congenital condition most common in small breeds like White Terriers and Maltese, although it can occur in any breed. It isn't always apparent at birth but often appears between the first and second years of a dog's life. Orthostatic Tremor (OT) is a postural tremor that only affects the dog while standing still. It is found sometimes in breeds of large dogs such as Great Danes and Deerhounds.

- **Drugs and Toxins**

Many drugs and toxins can cause tremors in dogs, including some which are safe for humans such as caffeine. Some drugs prescribed to dogs can also cause tremors as a side effect, so check the medications your dog is taking.

- **Injury to the Brain**

Tremors are often caused by abnormal brain activity. All types of brain injuries including trauma, stroke and brain tumors can cause this.

- **Canine Distemper**

Cerebellar related tremors and myoclonic seizure both occur as part of canine distemper, although this is an unlikely cause if your dog has shots.

- **Age**

Dogs can sometimes develop tremors as they age, called Physiologic and Essential Tremor Syndrome. These age-related tremors often involve the pelvis, and they can worsen with anxiety or intense emotions. The tremors can be very slight at first, but over time they may progressively worsen and cause balance and coordination problems.

- **Seizure**

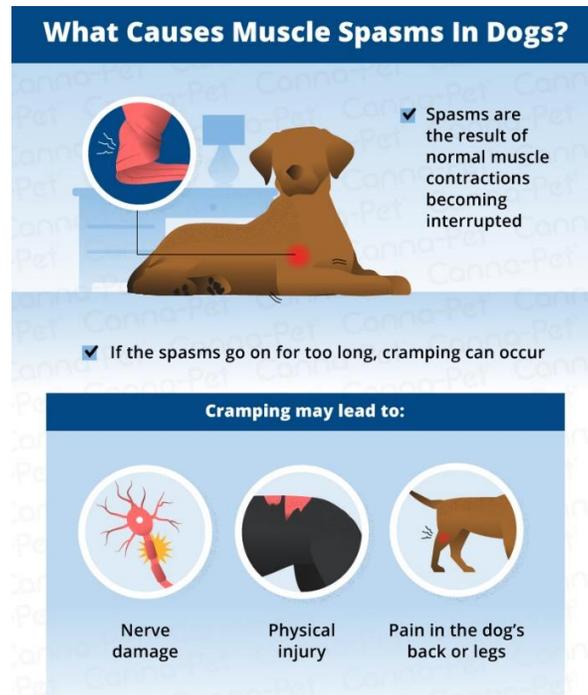
Seizures can look very different on different dogs. Periods of pronounced shaking can often be preceded by an initial anxiety period, and a post seizure period of disorientation, confusion, and weakness. [Involuntary Muscle Trembling in Dogs - Symptoms, Causes, Diagnosis, Treatment, Recovery, Management, Cost](https://www.petmd.com/dog/conditions/neurological/tremors) (wagwalking.com) © 2021 Wag Labs, Inc. All rights

There are some dog breeds that are believed to be predisposed to tremors, including chow chows, springer spaniels, Samoyeds, Weimaraners, Dalmatians, Doberman pinschers, English bulldogs and Labrador retrievers. Dogs that are prone to this condition are referred to as "shaker dogs."

<https://www.petmd.com/dog/conditions/neurological/tremors>

Published: Oct 06, 2010 PetMD

Remington did not seem to fit into any of the categories or explanations on the cause of muscle spasms or tremors.



Remi had a slight limp after exercise and sometimes in the morning. Dogs carry about 60 percent of their body weight on their front legs. That means the shoulders work harder than the rest of the body and that's why dogs of all ages often experience tight neck and shoulder muscles. [Paulette Jolliffe](#) Published: October 19, 2015 Updated: April 24, 2019.

He is a 7-year-old otherwise healthy Labradoodle. Arthritis came to mind as a possible attribute to his limping. During my Petmassage training Remi received many massages. Massage has a therapeutic benefit by increasing circulation and breaking up adhesions in connective tissue. Stretching the limbs lengthens constricted muscles, increasing flexibility and mobility, which helps decrease inflammation and pain. Having massages on his deltoid that potentially had arthritis could have possibly led to a healing crisis

A healing crisis according to Rudinger, Jonathan [Canine Massage for Passionate Dog People](#) PetMassage Media, First Edition (2019) is the process of self-restoration and healing. PetMassage helps your dog unpeel to his deepest layers to resolve the real issues wherever they might be. Another way to say this is the therapeutic effects of massage affect the underlying, often deeply rooted causes that express or show themselves as behavior called symptoms. These unexpected responses are called a healing crisis. They surface to be acknowledged and released so that your dog can continue his life journey lightened from his dysfunctional baggage.

Some common examples of a healing crisis may include: Limping: as muscle memory has been stimulated and the memories held in the fascia are released. Seizures: the neural tube and

dura matter have been stimulated. Dopamine levels are rebalancing in the body. Having received many massages on his deltoid, the muscle simply had a healing crisis releasing old memories as the fascia and surrounding tissues were relaxed and healing was introduced. Remi was utilizing the benefits that massage can provide and allowing it to contribute to his overall wellness. Healing Crisis, The Nature of Animal Healing. Goldstein, Martin, DVM, pp. 163-164, Ballantine Publishing Group, 1999.

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