

# Glucosamine and chondroitin for pets and humans

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Glucosamine is a natural joint component that the body produces, found in every mammal, that helps rebuild, repair and renew cartilage. It is natural, safe and extremely effective. The body distributes Glucosamine to joint and other connective tissue. Glucosamine does not hide or mask the pain, but rebuilds the joint cartilage that has been lost so there is less cause for pain. Glucosamine works, which is why glucosamine joint products are among the most widely used nutrition supplements today.

**Why do pets, especially dogs, and humans need it?** Well, as dogs and humans of all breeds and sizes get older, they lose flexibility in their joints due to natural deterioration and aging. Some other factors that can influence the loss are obesity, injury, genetic predisposition and poor diet. The joint experiences a natural "wear and tear" of cartilage, a rubbery material at the end of bones that acts as a shock absorber. It is this cartilage rubbing against cartilage that wears down the joint. However, this is natural, something that the body works to repair so the joint continues to work smoothly.

**What happens in the joint?** The joint's repair process is constantly working on two key tasks. Tear down the pitted, worn and old cartilage while building new, smooth and strong cartilage. This new, strong cartilage is what allows us and our pets to get up and around. Without it, our bone ends would be hitting each other, causing extreme pain.

**How does Glucosamine work?** Glucosamine provides the components that collagen, a key component of cartilage, uses to build its supporting framework. One of the key ingredients in collagen is water, which is supported by a ropelike substance called proteoglycans. Glucosamine supports proteoglycan synthesis in two ways. The first is it is a key compound in proteoglycan structure. The second is that glucosamine also stimulates the cells that produce proteoglycans. The glucosamine supports proteoglycan production which keeps the water in collagen in place.

**What is the source of Glucosamine?** Glucosamine comes from Chitin, a primary component in shellfish. The proteins and calcium are stripped away to produce pure Glucosamine. It is then stabilized with another ingredient to ensure its potency. It is often mixed with chondroitin and various co-factors, including vitamin C, selenium, copper and boron which are essential for healthy joint cartilage.

**What is Chondroitin?** Chondroitin, also known as chondroitin sulfate, is a naturally occurring compound found in cartilage. When chondroitin is present in the body, it is purported to promote healthy joints by warding off the effects of damaging enzymes, increasing water retention, and enhancing the elastic properties of cartilage.

**How much is necessary to improve joint health?** Scientists who have studied glucosamine and chondroitin have come to realize that the body is able to absorb as much as 15% when taken as a dietary supplement. The recommended daily dosages for those who take it as a supplement varies depending on the research one looks at;

but suffice to say that it is best taken regularly throughout the day in quite large amounts and with food.

My advice is to take the maximum recommended daily dose on the label of whatever you purchase and to do so for at least three months before easing off.

If administering to pets, it is recommended that the doses be scaled according to weight, assuming an average human weight of a bout 70kg.

There are few, if any, adverse affects of note from taking glucosamine and chondroitin, and it is safe to take in conjunction with pain relievers and other arthritis prescription drugs. Instances of mild stomach irritation have been reported in some cases. People hoping for joint relief should be patient once they start a chondroitin regimen; results can take up to two months to be noticeable. Exercise caution if there is a history of shellfish allergy.



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