

Canine Agility Tops One Million Annual Entrants Amid Surging Injuries—Veterinarian Demands Urgent Overhaul in Care

FORT COLLINS, CO, UNITED STATES, March 12, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- With annual entries for AKC agility trials exceeding one million, the high-energy sport of canine agility is surging in popularity. In her latest article in [Veterinary Practice News](#), "Agility injuries in dogs: Are veterinarians dropping the ball?", Narda G. Robinson, DO, DVM, MS, FAAMA, delivers a wake-up call to the veterinary community about the alarming frequency of injury, underdiagnoses, and insufficient prevention strategies for agility dogs.

Research cited by Dr. Robinson shows a troubling trend:

- A 2013 internet-based survey found that 32% of agility dogs sustained one or more musculoskeletal injuries.
- A later study indicates that 77% of surveyed canine handlers reported at least one injury in dogs they trained that altered or halted their program.
- Over one-third of dog handlers reported likely infectious disease transmission at agility events.

These findings highlight significant physical risks to canine athletes, ranging from muscle and tendon injuries to possibly affecting the spine and nervous system. Dr. Robinson underscores the urgent need for proactive veterinary involvement. The sport's rapid expansion calls upon veterinarians to expand their knowledge base and skillset to up their game and safeguard dogs' wellbeing.

"Preparticipation physical exams, comprehensive assessments, and ongoing monitoring of agility dogs could dramatically reduce injuries and help maintain performance," says Dr. Robinson. "It's time for veterinarians to advocate for evidence-based, preventive, and [integrative rehabilitative care](#) supporting dogs in sports, from amateurs to athletes."

Key recommendations in the article include:

- Myofascial palpation as part of every exam to detect and address muscle pulls and strain patterns before they become debilitating.
- Evidence-informed modification of training regimens and course design, drawing attention to risky angles, footing challenges, and obstacles contributing to frequent injuries.
- Enhanced networking among veterinary professionals, agility organizations, and handlers to produce prospective research, share data, and protect participants.
- Comprehensive assessments that monitor cardiovascular and neurologic status in addition to

musculoskeletal health.

Dr. Robinson taught science-based integrative veterinary medicine for 20 years at Colorado State University, now, she leads her own academy in Fort Collins, Colo. She is bringing forward this call to action to emphasize the need for veterinarians to actively pursue further education in rehabilitation and sports medicine. As interest in canine agility continues to rise, she is urging her profession to adopt stronger preventive measures, provide thorough post-participation evaluations, and guide canine caregivers to make well-informed decisions for their dogs' health.

About Dr. Narda G. Robinson

Dr. Robinson, a practicing osteopathic physician and veterinarian, is an international leader in evidence-based integrative medicine. She served on the faculty of the Colorado State University College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences for two decades and is the founder of [CuraCore VET](#), dedicated to teaching scientific medical acupuncture, integrative rehabilitation, medical massage, and other integrative medical approaches.

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