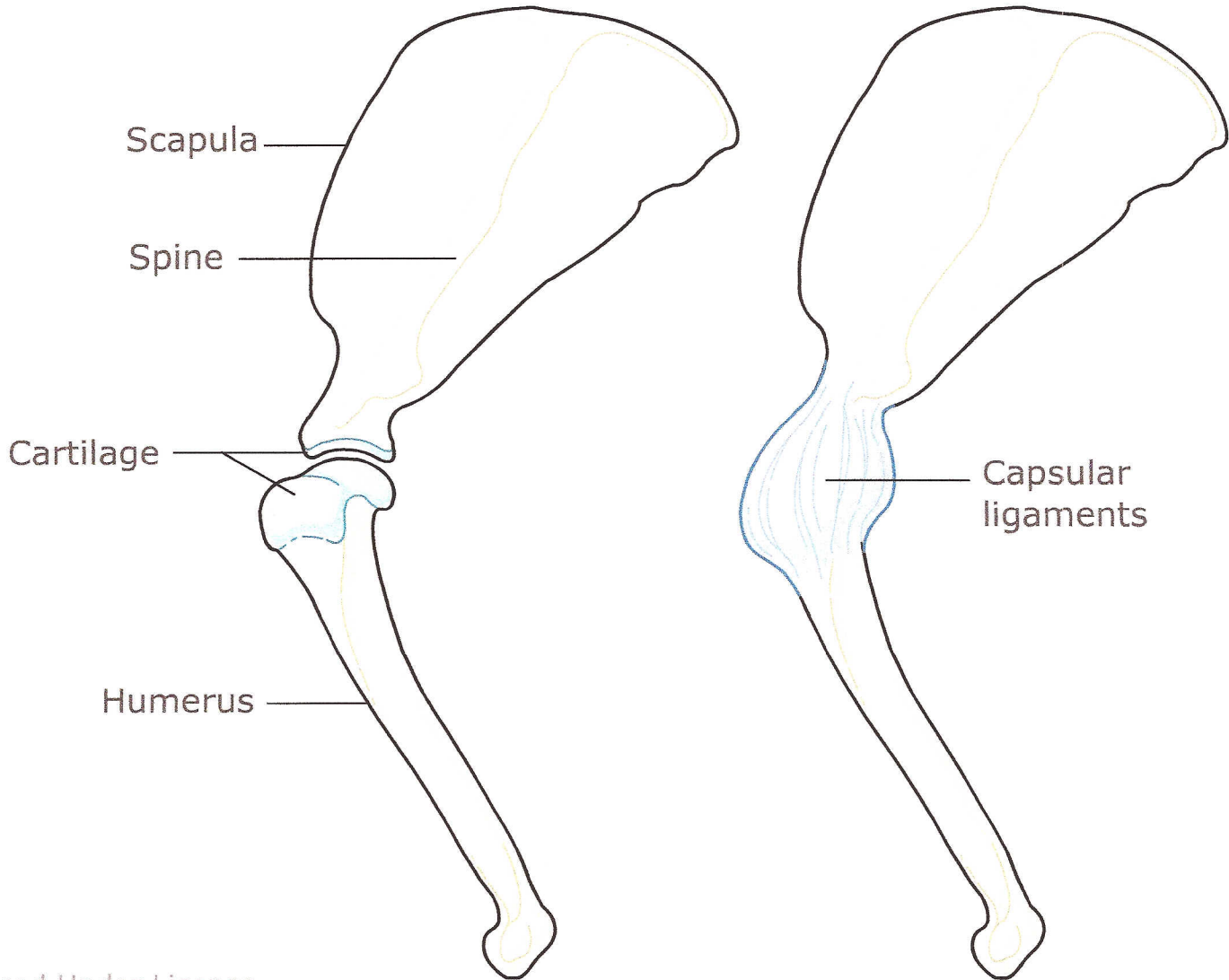


Shoulder Joint - Cat: Scapula and humerus showing articular cartilage and joint capsule.



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The shoulder joint connects the shoulder blade or scapula to the humerus. The front leg is connected to the body by muscles that attach to either the upper or lower surface of the scapula. The shoulder joint is a modified ball and socket joint with the ball being formed by the rounded end of the humerus. All of the bony surfaces within the shoulder joint are covered with cartilage, called articular cartilage. Surrounding the joint is a joint capsule that contains fluid. The cartilage and joint fluid act as a cushion, preventing the bones from rubbing against each other. Damage to the joint leads to inflammation and over time, arthritis will develop.