

Pawsitive Press

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Senior Pets

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The health of our cat's and dog's will change naturally as they age, and it is our honor to look out for them and bring as much quality to their lives as we can. Just like us they can go through mental and physical changes. Some of these changes can be outwardly detected, such as decreases in energy, strength, vision, hearing, etc. But there are also inward changes that are best detected early on exam and diagnostics like blood work and radiographs.



Some of the first changes you may start to notice in your senior pet are that they sleep more or more deeply. They may not hear you coming into the house or a room or may have more trouble making things out visually



in dimmer lighting. Many can adjust well if these changes come on gradually. I do advise trying to keep their environment familiar and limit the moving of furniture and such if this is occurring. Muzzles and eyes may become more gray and coats may become more dull. When exercising they may be less eager to go or go as far. And though some of this can be a natural process of aging, sometimes there are also treatable medical conditions.

There are some big signs you want to alert us to that can indicate bigger underlying concerns. Changes in breathing is a big one. Such as a change in voice, a cough, shallow breathing, increase in panting (especially if you ever see panting in your cat!) or them having to

use their abdomen in an effort to breath. Changes in appetite and thirst can also indicate concerns such as kidney changes, liver changes, Diabetes, Cushing's Disease, etc. Some of those can also be noticed as accidents in the house or litter box habits. Changes in weight, typically weight loss in cats or dogs, but also unexpected weight gain in dogs, can be the result of metabolic changes like thyroid disease. Sometimes it can be deceiving to you because you see them eating well and think everything is fine, but it is a concern especially if they are losing weight despite having a good appetite. In our cats even a matter of a half pound weight loss or so is a big change and can be like us losing 10 pounds or more! In our senior pets we do advise biannual physical exams and lab work to help with early detection of any ailments that may be best managed if caught early.



Senior Pets Cont'd

Also look for behavior changes. Our pets may be run less zoomies and be more interested in lounging and soaking up the sun. But if your cranky kitty is no longer feisty or if your sweet puddy cat is becoming fractious, this can also be a warning sign that something may be wrong. Showing increased stiffness, or anxiety, or aggression can mean something is wrong or uncomfortable. Dogs are especially prone to getting senility issues, a condition called Canine Cognitive Decline. This can be similar to Sundowners in humans where at night your dog gets more vocal, may wander/pace, may seem disoriented/confused, and can be restless at nighttime. There is no cure for it but there are things we can try via diet, supplements, and sometimes medication to improve Fido's life and yours.



Senior dogs and cats can be more prone to arthritis and they can have trouble rising, holding themselves up to go potty, get up and down stairs or into the litterbox, etc. They can often benefit from

environmental enrichment like adding rugs with traction, using ramps or footstools to help get up and down, maybe elevating bowl height so as not to have to bend neck down as far, etc. They do have pet versions of glucosamine/chondroitin, omega fatty acids/fish oils, and options if bigger steps are needed such as anti-inflammatory drugs, acupuncture, laser, physical therapy, etc.



In this day and age the majority of our pets will live long and full lives with many of them reaching well into their teen years. The senior years are a special time and keeping a healthy body and weight through regular exercise and good nutrition, partnered with biannual exams and lab work can help us maintain their quality of life to give you as much time together as possible.



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Senior pets are at risk of cancer, diabetes, joint problems, as well as heart, kidney, and liver diseases.



There are special diet and nutrition needs to keep in mind as your pet ages. Your vet can help you learn more.



Exercise can help senior pets maintain better health and can even help prevent certain illnesses.



Taking special care of your senior pet can grant you extra years with your loved one! Talk to your vet today!



They also require different veterinary care than younger pets. Talk to your vet about caring for your senior pet.



Poor dental care leads to a higher risk of diseases, so practice home dental care and get professional cleanings.

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First Exam - New Patient

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Discount applies to anesthesia, prophylaxis, and any other dental radiographs or extractions that might be needed. Offer excludes required pre-dental labwork. May not be combined with any other coupons or discounts. Must be presented at the time of purchase.

Expires 8.31.21 NL



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\$60 Rebate with purchase of 12mos of Heartgard and Nexgard

Purchase 12 months of Heartgard and Nexgard to receive a \$60 rebate from the manufacturer. A pre-paid gift card will be sent to your address. By law, pets must have been seen in our office within the last 12 months and should have a negative heartworm test. Coupon must be presented at the time of purchase. Coupon may not be combined with any other offer.

Expires 8.31.21 NL