

CANINE SENIOR WELLNESS PROGRAM

Most of us don't need a medical checkup more than once a year. But dogs are different. Adult dogs may age up to **eight times faster than humans**. Because dogs age rapidly, major health changes can occur in as little as three months. The risks of cancer, diabetes, obesity, kidney disease, heart disease, liver disease and other serious conditions all increase with age. Since today's pets are living longer than ever, chances are many will experience a potentially serious illness during their lifetime.

Twice yearly wellness exams can help us diagnose, treat or even prevent problems before they become life-threatening. They're also a great opportunity to ask us about nutrition, behavior and other issues that can affect older pets.



These are our recommendations for diagnostic testing for your senior dog:

- Senior Wellness Exam**
- CBC / Chem25 / Electrolytes**
- T4**
- Complete Urinalysis**
- Blood Pressure Measurement**
- Intra-Ocular Pressure Measurement**

Senior Physical Exam: a complete examination, with special attention to areas that may be affected by age, such as the teeth and gums, eyes, skin and coat, heart and lungs, bones and joints. We will also note and evaluate any new lumps and bumps that appear between exams. Male dogs, especially if not neutered, should have the prostate examined as well.

CBC / Chem 25 / Electrolytes: a set of tests that allow us to evaluate the internal organs, blood cells and electrolytes. A healthy appearing dog may be hiding symptoms of a disease or ailment. Testing helps us pick up problems before symptoms occur.

T4: an important screening test for hypothyroidism. Some signs that may indicate this condition would be weight gain and poor coat quality. If an under-active thyroid is left untreated, it can have a serious impact on your dog's health.

Urinalysis: not only indicates how well the kidneys are functioning, but also may reveal evidence of such conditions as Diabetes mellitus, Cushing's Disease and Hepatitis, among others.

Blood pressure: As subtle as the signs of hypertension are in humans, they are much harder to pick up in dogs until the damage is done to internal organs like the heart and kidneys. Years ago hypertension was not even recognized in dogs, but now we have the ability to diagnose and treat it before harm is done. It is a good idea to have a baseline measurement at about 5 to 6 years of age, for comparison later in life.

Intra-ocular pressure: Glaucoma is the leading cause of blindness in dogs. It is a particular danger in some breeds, but all dogs can be affected. Unfortunately, by the time you can see there is a problem, the vision in that eye is lost. By checking intraocular pressure, we can screen for and treat mild increases before they have a chance to become serious.