

A Happy Healthy Dog

Let's work to keep it that way

Just as we age, so do our dogs and while they can't tell us how they are feeling, there are ways in which you can ensure, as your pet gets older, that they are in the best possible health.

Underlying causes of illness and disease can be picked up earlier by regular visits to your veterinary practice for a **Senior Health Check**

Practice



NationWide
LABORATORIES

What can I do to keep my ageing dog healthy?

Regular exercise, a good diet, vaccination and good dental monitoring will all help to keep your dog healthy.

You know your dog better than anyone else - look out for:

- Behavioural changes
- A change in appetite whether increased or decreased
- An increase in drinking and urination
- Lower activity and lethargy
- Any changes in their stools
- Lameness or reduced mobility after resting or during exercise

If you spot any of these signs contact your veterinary surgeon for advice.

As your dog ages, underlying changes may occur which, if discovered earlier, can be treated at a lower cost and may help prevent or slow age related problems in your dog.

What can my vet do to keep my dog healthy?

Your vet will check the physical health of your dog by conducting a thorough clinical examination. In addition they may recommend sending samples to a diagnostic laboratory to look for signs of organ disfunction or disease such as Diabetes, Diabetes Mellitus, Hypothyroidism and kidney disease as well as many others.

Early diagnosis enables earlier treatment and reduces the likelihood of unnecessary suffering.



What do these tests involve?

As part of the Senior Health Check, which ideally should be done once a year, your vet will take a blood sample from your dog and may also ask for a urine sample. These samples will be sent to a diagnostic laboratory and the results used to monitor your dog's health.

For example:- **Urine analysis** - will look for substances which shouldn't be present in your dog's urine. (See table below)

Substance	What this means
Protein	A variety of conditions including disease of the kidney, inflammatory diseases or some tumours
Red blood cells	May indicate bleeding into urinary tract
White blood cells	Possible indicator of urinary infection
Crystal formation	Indicator of possible stone formation
Glucose	Possible diabetes mellitus

Blood Count - Blood analysis allows evaluation for anaemia, presence of inflammation, stress and inability to fight disease due to immunosuppression.

Blood Chemistry - This will give an indication of how various organs are working. Low or high levels of various components in the blood will give information on the health status of your dog and indicate whether there are any early signs of underlying malfunctions in organs such as liver and kidneys..

Hormone levels – Will give an indication of how your dog's thyroid is functioning. For example, dogs can suffer with an underactive thyroid (hypothyroidism) leading to lethargy and weight gain.

When is my dog in its senior years?



Well this depends on your dog's age, size, breed and lifestyle but in general terms:-

Size of Dog	Weight range	Senior	Geriatric
Small	0-10Kg	9-13 years	13 years+
Medium	10-20Kg	9-11.5 years	11.5 years+
Large	20-40Kg	7.5-10.5 years	10.5 years+
Giant	Over 40Kg	6-9 years	9 years+

Pets age much more rapidly than humans and this gradual onset of "ageing problems" may go unnoticed in a previously healthy pet until signs of disease are obvious.

Why is it important to do this annually?

Taking your dog for a Senior Health Check each year will allow regular monitoring of your dog's health. Even where no underlying disease is found, these tests provide your vet with a baseline for any future testing. Early detection of underlying disorders can lead to earlier treatment which will help maintain a good quality of life for your dog at a lower cost to you.

**Ask your Vet about a
Senior Health Check today
and keep your dog –
A Happy Healthy Pet**



Delivering excellence and innovation in animal health

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