



Senior Pets



10+ years



7+ years

What does it mean to be a senior dog or cat?

While age is not a disease, senior pets can have different nutritional and medical needs. They are at higher risk of developing conditions that cause chronic pain, or other changes that can affect their quality of life.

What does River Valley recommend for care of senior pets?

Once a pet is a senior, we recommend having your pet seen twice a year. This way we can meet with you to discuss any concerns you may have about your senior pet. We may recommend additional blood tests, urine tests or imaging to screen for common disease seen in senior pets. Early detection and treatment can have positive impacts on the quality and quantity of life for your senior pet.



6 months

CBC, Chemistry
Urinalysis
Thyroid

Yearly or before anesthesia

Fecal testing
proBNP (heart)
X-rays



6 months

CBC, Chemistry
Urinalysis
Thyroid

Yearly or before anesthesia

Tick-borne disease and heartworm test
Fecal testing
X-rays / Abdominal ultrasound

What food should I be feeding my senior pet?

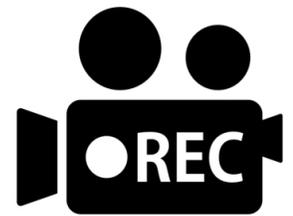
Did you know that senior dogs often have decreased calorie requirements while senior cats often have increased calorie requirements? Depending on your pet's health and physical needs the staff at River Valley will recommend a food that is appropriate for the lifestyle of your pet.

My senior pet has dental disease. Is it safe for them to undergo anesthesia?

Senior pets are at increased risk for dental problems including periodontal disease and oral cancers. Dental procedures can greatly impact your pets' (and your) quality of life. Before anesthesia it is important to meet with a veterinarian to assess overall safety of the procedure. This will include bloodwork to monitor organ function, and may include chest x-rays to assess the heart and lungs. Schedule the procedure when you can be home with your pet, and provide a comfortable place at home for them to recover.

What are symptoms you should tell the veterinary staff about?

- Signs of pain
- Changes in water consumption or urine output
- Changes in appetite, weight gain, and weight loss
- Vomiting, diarrhea, and constipation
- Behavior changes including increased anxiety
- Loss of house training in a previously trained pet
- New lumps on the body or open sores
- Monitor for changes in hearing and vision



It may be helpful to get
a video or picture

Home tips for caring for senior pets

- Provide regular grooming and nail care
- Provide good bedding that is adequately padded
- Cover slippery floors with secure rugs/mats for better traction
- Keep flies, fleas, and ticks off senior pets
- Continue to use parasite preventatives (ie interceptor, credelio, revolution)
- Provide physical and mental enrichment through low-impact exercise and continued training
- Food and water bowls may have to be slightly elevated
- Keep litterboxes on the ground with low-entry
- There are many nutraceuticals that can benefit senior pets
 - o Joint (glucosamine, dasuquin)
 - o Omega fatty acids (welactin)
 - o Liver (SamE)