



NORTH AVENUE ANIMAL HOSPITAL, P.C.

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Senior Pets Need Special Care

Diet, exercise and medical advances are not only benefiting humans, but are also working to add years and enhance the quality of lives in our pets! The key to extending and improving the lives of our pets not only in quantity but also in quality is similar to preventative programs for humans: **DIET, EXERCISE, REGULAR EXAMINATIONS AND TESTS FOR EARLY DISEASE DETECTION.**

Most cats reach their senior years between the ages of 8-10. With dogs it varies depending on breed size, from about 7-11 years; larger dogs are considered seniors earlier and smaller dogs later. As pets age, owners may notice physical signs such as weight gain, thinning and graying coats, bad breath, behavioral changes, arthritis, hearing and vision loss, and/or inappropriate urination. Common ailments in senior pets that can be fatal but may not be immediately noticeable include cancer, kidney failure, dental problems and heart disease. *The key to controlling these problems is to detect the diseases early, through regular visits to the veterinarian.*

As part of a preventative exam for a senior pet, your veterinarian may suggest a *blood chemistry profile* and/or a *urinalysis*. Depending on the medical history and physical exam, radiographs or other tests may also be suggested, as well as a change in your pets' diet and/or exercise routine.

Dental care, although always important, becomes even more so as our pets age. In senior pets a professional dental cleaning and polishing may need to be performed more often than once per year. Physical exams may also become necessary more often.

Today's medical advances help pets live longer, but *care at home and lifestyle* are still the keys to increasing the quality and length of our pets' lives. Owners that combine this with regular veterinary visits and follow the recommendations of their veterinarian are providing their pets with the best chance to live longer and healthier lives.

Your pet's health depends on you!