



Wellness for Older Pets

Important facts about senior testing

An aging pet's organs gradually deteriorate and may lose their ability to function properly. Many problems common to senior pets may not present clinical signs until your pet becomes seriously ill. At Companion Animal Clinic we have developed our Senior Wellness Plan to promote early detection and treatment of disease, so we can maintain health and prevent illness during your pet's senior years. Early detection of disease often gives us more effective and less costly treatment options. Senior testing also helps establish normal baseline values for your pet, creating a point of comparison for the future.

What pets should take part in senior testing?

We recommend senior testing for all senior pets as well as any pet who is exhibiting one or more of the following symptoms: weight loss or gain, increased thirst or urination, lethargy, vomiting/diarrhea, poor hair coat, coughing, seizures, unusual behavior, or overall decline in condition.

Major problems and illnesses in older pets include:

Weight loss or gain, arthritis, kidney disease, liver disease, dental disease, diabetes, adrenal disease, cancer, hind leg weakness, poor hair coat, impaired senses, and memory loss.

The Senior Wellness Plan

Your pet's complete senior testing program includes these elements:

- > **A physical exam** is the most important part of the senior care program. Your veterinarian will assess all body systems to check for any abnormalities.
- > **Blood chemistry tests** measure levels of various substances in the blood to test major organ function. We will test for diseases such as diabetes, liver and kidney failure.
- > **A complete blood count (CBC)** provides a detailed look at the blood itself to diagnose anemia, inflammation, infection, and some cancers.
- > **A urinalysis** gives information on kidney function and checks for urinary tract infections.
- > **The thyroid screen (T4)** helps diagnose thyroid disease, which is an especially common ailment in older cats and dogs.
- > The **4DX-SNAP** test to test for blood parasites, including heartworms, Anaplasma, Ehrlichia, and Lyme disease.
- > One set of **radiographs**, which can be used to diagnose arthritis, detect tumors, and examine the abdominal organs.

Cardiac Screen

We recommend the additional cardiac screen for pets at risk for heart disease or showing the following signs: exercise intolerance, collapse, lethargy, labored breathing, cough, or increased respiratory rate.

The cardiac screen includes the following tests:

- > **Chest radiographs (X-rays)**
- > **Electrocardiogram (ECG)**
- > **Blood pressure measurement**
- > **Consult with a veterinary internal medicine specialist**

Further testing may be recommended for individual pets depending on risk factors and clinical signs.

Ask us today how to sign up your senior pet!