

SOUTH COAST VET CARE ~ ANIMAL MATTERS

SENIOR DOG'S

Early Detection of Diseases in Older Pets is Essential

Many things that are considered to be signs of old age are actually early symptoms of disease. As with all diseases, early diagnosis is important as it allows treatment before significant damage is done. This is particularly important for older animals as they are likely to have less resilience than young animals.

In older pets, one year is probably equal to at least five of our years, so our pets start to age quickly as they get older and your pet needs a check up twice a year. (One at Vaccination time and one other throughout the year.)

We will perform a thorough physical examination. This examination will check your dog's circulatory and respiratory systems, immune system, skin and coat condition, eyes, ears and oral health, and include palpation of the abdomen. If any abnormalities are noticed more detailed examinations of specific areas may be indicated, including ophthalmoscopy of the eyes or otoscopy of the ears. It is also beneficial for all dogs over the age of ten years to have annual blood tests to screen for signs of disease. Blood testing is the ideal way to pick up a wide range of diseases early and gives us a good picture of their overall health which examination alone cannot.

Because lifestyles vary and you are with your pet all the time, you may have noticed some signs or behaviour that may not be evident in the consulting room. If you have noticed any changes, please consider the following and bring anything of note to the attention of the vet: If you circle any of the shaded responses please tell the vet as your dog may be suffering the early stages of a treatable disease.

(Please circle Y or N)

Does your dog:	YES	NO	Does your dog:	YES	NO
Have access to farm or bushland?.....	Y	N	Have trouble jumping up?.....	Y	N
Get out of breath easily during exercise?...	Y	N	Shake his/her head or scratch excessively?..	Y	N
Drink large volumes of water?.....	Y	N	Have any lumps or sores on/in the skin?.....	Y	N
Urinate excessively?.....	Y	N	Pass 'wind', or have soft/loose motions?....	Y	N
Vomit regularly?.....	Y	N	'Scoot' on his/her bottom?.....	Y	N
Strain to defaecate or urinate?.....	Y	N	Have smelly ears?.....	Y	N
Have difficulty seeing or hearing?.....	Y	N	Have bad breath/trouble eating?.....	Y	N
Has your dog lost or gained weight?.....	Y	N	Have a duller coat than before?.....	Y	N
Seems stiff in the joints?.....	Y	N			

~ Is your dog's activity level, alertness/responsiveness,

Greeting behaviour, play, family interaction: High Normal Low Very Low

~ Does your dog show any unusual behaviour such as urinating or defecating inside, barking for no reason, staring into space, disorientation, grumpiness or aggression: No Occasionally Sometimes Often

~ How would you describe your dog's night sleep patterns: Sleeps well at night and less than 1/3 of the day. Restless at night yet sleeps much of the day.