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### **BENEFITS**

- Healthy Weight
- Comfortable Joints
- Stronger Immune System
- Better Digestion
- Proper Blood Sugar
- Improved Energy
- Strong Muscles
- Healthy Organs



### **DEXTER SUGGESTS**

Ask our knowledgeable staff about adjusting your pet's diet.

Check out these books:

- *See Spot Live Longer*
- *Dr. Pitcairn's Guide to Natural Health for Dogs and Cats*
- *Whole Health for Happy Cats*
- *The New Holistic Way for Dogs & Cats*
- *Complete Care for your Aging Dog*

## **EXTRA CARE FOR SENIORS**

**SENIOR FOOD?** There actually isn't a scientific basis for "senior" diets. The goal of feeding an older animal is to ensure there is plenty of *highly digestible* protein, sufficient fiber, proper fat levels, and supplements that reduce inflammation and increase immunity.

### **PREVENTING OBESITY**

This is one of the most common problems in older pets, and one of the most preventable. As animals age their metabolism slows down, so they require fewer calories, more fiber, and lower fat. Obesity puts pets at greater risk for increased joint pain, back problems, diabetes, pancreatitis, hypo- and hyper-thyroidism, cancer, and more. If you have trouble keeping your pet at a healthy weight you should get them checked out by your vet for hidden medical causes (hypothyroidism is now common in dogs, for example, and can explain difficulty in reducing weight).

### **DON'T SKIMP ON PROTEIN**

Unless your pet is dealing with severe kidney disease you should not reduce the amount of protein in their food. Reducing protein unnecessarily can result in increased appetite (as the body tries to provide the fuel it needs), muscle wasting (reduced ability to absorb nutrition), and inflammation (low protein usually means more grains).

You should feed the highest quality protein, which will be more digestible for their aging system. Digestible protein for a healthy senior pet means meat. Freshly cooked or raw are the most digestible, followed by dehydrated and canned. Dry food is the least digestible protein source. If you use dry food please add fresh or canned meat to the diet. Enzymes added to food make the protein even easier for them to assimilate.

### **ENZYMES ARE ESSENTIAL**

Enzymes are one of the most important supplements you can give senior animals. As animals age their ability to produce enough on their own diminishes. Enzymes help break down the proteins, fats, and carbs in their diet, which means more nutrition will get to their body. Enzymes improve the assimilation of essential fatty acids in fish oil by 71%, and themselves provide some anti-inflammatory properties.

### **MIND THE FAT**

Because senior pets have less ability to utilize fat, be sure that the fat you *do* include is the most important kind – Omega 3 fatty acids (as found in fish oil). Fish oil provides important elements that reduce inflammation and improve brain function.



## PRODUCTS

- Animal Essentials Senior Support
- Jarrow Petdopholus
- The Honest Kitchen Perfect Form
- Animal Essentials Plant Enzymes & Probiotics
- DGP (Dog Gone Pain)
- Liquid Health Joint Supplements
- Grizzly Fish Oils
- Animal Essentials Omega 3 Fish Oil
- Animal Essentials Plant Enzymes & Probiotics
- Dr. Harvey's Golden Years
- Herbal Energetics Pet Boost
- Pet Wellness Blends Canine Wellness
- Animal Essentials Herbal Green Alternative
- Mushroom Matrix
- Holistic Hound CBD Treats

## FIBER

Older pets benefit from healthy fiber in their diets because their slower metabolism can mean slower digestion. If your pet loves salad, by all means top the meal with some raw or steamed veggies (usually best to put them in the blender first). If your pet REALLY loves salad be sure the rest of the meal is high in protein so you can be sure they're getting enough. You can also mix in pet supplements that contain fiber like ground flax seed, psyllium husk powder, or ground pumpkin seed.

## INFLAMMATION

Inflammation occurs throughout the body, and become more prevalent with age. Inflammation is associated with many problems of old age, especially joint pain and cancer. There are many different opinions on what causes inflammation, but most agree that feeding species-appropriate fresh-food diets are the best way to minimize inflammation. Certain supplements are key to reducing inflammation as well, such as fish oil, glucosamine/chondroitin/MSM joint supplements, herbal joint supplements, and enzymes.

## JOINT CARE

Don't wait too long before starting your pet on a joint care supplement. Dogs, and especially cats, are hardwired to hide pain, so you may just think your pet is simply "less energetic" or "lazy," when in fact they're experiencing joint pain. Some joint supplements are designed to maintain joints, while others focus on reducing inflammation and pain. There are several options to fit your pet's needs. Exercise keeps joints strong and flexible, and massage and acupressure/acupuncture help too.

## WHAT ABOUT THE KIDNEYS?

There is often concern about the kidney function of older pets. Because reduced kidney function is a somewhat hidden problem in its early stages it's important to feed the best diet possible to reduce the strain on the kidneys in old age. This means highly digestible protein, digestive enzymes, and herbs that support the kidneys like Animals' Apawthecary Senior Blend. Making their meals moist (rather than feeding straight dry food) will help their bodies process the food and ease the load on the kidneys. If you notice your pet drinking more than they used to you should have them examined by your vet.

## CANCER

Cancer has become far too common in older pets. Fresh, species-appropriate food combined with anti-inflammatory supplements and antioxidants are one way to reduce the risk of cancer when used consistently over time, and are essential for helping pets dealing with a cancer diagnosis. If your older pet's appetite or activity level changes suddenly be sure to have them examined thoroughly by your vet.