



PET PAGES

Official Yellow Pages for Animal Lovers

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Pet Pages – For the South West Florida Edition

How to Keep Your Pet Living a Longer, Healthier & Happier Life

As pets age, they are prone to the same aging problems we are such as arthritis, pain, spinal disease, tooth / gum disease, kidney / liver problems, cardiac, tumors, cancer, diabetes, thyroid and cognitive dysfunction (dog Alzheimers) . First you must get an accurate diagnosis from your veterinarian, as many of these issues overlap and mimic each other. The treatments are completely different so making assumptions based on human symptoms or “Dr. Google” doesn’t work well. The longer issues go on, the lower the chance of successful outcome.

Pain has many causes and is often overlooked. I can’t count how many times I’ve done a three day pain trial with the owner calling back saying “my dog hasn’t acted like this in years” or “he is going on longer walks” or “can jump in the car like he used to”. Signs of pain can also be avoidance, aggression, house soiling, panting, restlessness, and temperament changes. Pain can also be undetectable as animals have better adaptive mechanisms. Just because they don’t whine, cry or complain doesn’t mean nothing is going on. A study was done at U. C. Davis that showed older canines that had their pain treated had a better quality of life. They were happier, and had more muscle mass due to more activity, which could translate into a longer life. Chronic pain in humans accelerates degenerative conditions. Aspirin is the #1 cause of gastric ulcers in people and canines, which is not recommended anymore as there are better and safer alternatives.

Arthritis- Glucosamine/Chondroitin/Hyaluronic acid can be very helpful and slow the degenerative process inside the joints. Anti-inflammatories like Boswellia, MSM, Curcumin, Omega 3’s and Traumeel can be helpful as well as non-steroid anti-inflammatories to keep the comfort level up. Hills J/D diet gives an excellent response as it is the only proactive product that helps eliminate the inflammation and pain before it starts without side effects or drugs. Over the counter diets with glucosamine do not have enough for optimal results.

Obesity-60% of US dogs and cats are overweight. This leads to lower activity, more stress, a lower quality of life and a shorter life span. A fifteen year study was done by Purina that found the trimmer group of canines lived 2-3 years longer and had less cancer and arthritis. I highly suggest you look up a previous Pet Pages article on “Pet foods what are you really buying? “ at www.petpages.com. You can also look up “Purina sues Blue Buffalo” to get an idea of what goes on in the pet food industry. You may be falling for advertising and not a balanced or consistent diet. Dogs are NOT carnivores like cats. Life

stage diets are superior. Lower protein/phosphorous diets in older pets spare the liver/kidneys and lowers body toxins which allows your pet to live longer as proven in many scientific studies. This is standard care for any pet with compromised liver or kidney function. All life stage diets by law have to meet the most demanding life stage which is growth for puppy or kitten. Your older pet does not need the excess protein and fat in these diets.

Cognitive Dysfunction- As pets are living longer, behavioral issues are more common.

These should be addressed after you have ruled out medical problems that can mimic the same signs. For example, aggression in some cases has a proven link to hypothyroidism but can also be from pain. Signs of cognitive dysfunction may include loss of learned behaviors, house soiling, wandering, pacing, anxiety, storm phobias or change in temperament. When the pets behavior becomes unacceptable to the owner, not only is the pet stressed but some owners response of anger, punishment, frustration or inconsistent treatment adds further anxiety and stress making things even worse.

There are many things you can now do to help slow this decline or even turn back the clock, depending on the case. Selegiline, Senilife, DMG, Same-E, Omega 3 fatty acids, Curcumin, Ginko, Resveratrol and others depending on what the problem is. VetriScience has an excellent line of products and has done the research and homework for you with good results. Also important is environmental enrichment as in play, exercise, walks or new toys to keep the mind active and engaged. Inactivity only speeds up decline in mental and physical health.

have had success using three companies that do not use fillers, are hypoallergenic and check every batch of their product for purity before it leaves the plant. Look up www.NewYorkdailynews.com/herbal supplement investigation where DNA analysis showed little to no active ingredient in many products from many major stores/pharmacies. These products are not checked so you may be buying fillers and getting no response. By catching medical and behavioral problems early you will have much more success. This article only scratches the surface of advancements in Geriatric medicine and behavior. There are many natural and traditional therapies available. Give your pet the benefits of a longer happier life.

Exotic Services by Jack Landess, DVM and Nokomis Veterinary Clinic, 405 Albee Rd W, Nokomis. (941) 484-2485

Approved By _____ Date _____

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