

PET HEALTH SCREENS

Pets age much more rapidly than humans and this gradual onset of “aging problems” often goes unnoticed in a previously healthy pet until significant clinical signs occur as a result of the slow degeneration of various body components. Just like people, as your pet ages its organs will slowly deteriorate and lose their ability to function.

PETS CAN'T TALK AND HIDE PROBLEMS WELL:

Physical examination can only detect diseases that produce clinical signs. However, recent advances in diagnostic blood screening, urinalysis and EKG screening now make it possible to detect many “aging conditions” long before clinical signs are present. When problems such as kidney disease, liver disease, heart disease, thyroid abnormalities, anemia, diabetes, and glaucoma can be caught early, the appropriate steps can be taken (such as dietary changes or medications) to either reverse the problem or at least slow it down. These diagnostic tools also increase the safety by reducing the risks of “unknowns” if and when any future anesthesia is required. We can now become **PROACTIVE** rather than reactive to make recommendations to provide the best life possible for your pet.

Mid-Life Health Screenings

The “mid-life adult stage” of a pet’s life provides us the opportunity to not only maintain optimum health for the pet, but also prepare for the more extensive senior pet programs. For convenience, the senior years are defined as starting at approximately 7 years in pets. We know, however, that the large breeds of dogs enter the geriatric phase of life at a much younger age.

Mid-life visits provide us the opportunity to “seed-plant” preventive care for future years. It allows us to communicate the early signs of aging and pain to look for. We can recommend ways to reduce aging “risk factors.”

Senior Health Screenings

We feel wellness screening is essential for your senior pet’s best quality of life. Each year of a pet’s life represents 5-10% of its total life span. Performing these procedures once each year is the same as once every 5-7 years for a senior adult person.

As pets age, stress upon vital internal organs is likely to become more serious. Vitamin requirements generally increase, and nutritional needs differ greatly from those of younger pets. Sources of chronic infection, such as tooth and gum disease, can adversely affect internal organs and contribute to failing health. Aging also increases the risks of arthritis, disk disease, and other skeletal problems. Many of these problems are readily detectable and can be controlled if diagnosed early and treated properly.

As pets approach the “Senior Years,” it is the time to become more concerned with the early diagnosis and detection of internal problems that are not readily apparent on routine physical examination. As an example, without appropriate screening, we would not be able to diagnose diabetes, liver or kidney disease, bladder problems, or other serious problems like heart disease. Unfortunately, these problems are in the very advanced stages before clinical signs can be observed. Much damage is already done.

Just as there is a major emphasis on human health screening programs, veterinary medicine now offers the same for our pet family members. We care about your pet’s quality of life as much as you do, and we want your pet to live as long as possible without unnecessary suffering or illness. We also recognize that it is much less costly for owners when problems are detected early and treatment instituted then rather



than waiting for many of these aging problems to cause severe, irreversible damage.

DOG HEALTH SCREENS

We offer two (2) Health Screen Options

Our BASIC HEALTH SCREEN INCLUDES:

- CBC (Complete Blood Count)
- Blood Chemistry Profile (Including GLU, BUN, CREA, ALT, ALKP, K, TP)
- Heartworm Antigen Test

Our COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH SCREEN INCLUDES:

- Urinalysis
- CBC (Complete Blood Count)
- Complete Blood Chemistry Profile
- Heartworm Antigen Test
- Thyroid Testing (T₄)

FELINE HEALTH SCREEN

Our FELINE HEALTH SCREEN INCLUDES:

- Urinalysis
- CBC (Complete Blood Count)
- Complete Blood Chemistry Profile
- Feline Leukemia Test
- Feline Aids (FIV) Test
- Thyroid Testing (T₄)

URINALYSIS.

It has been said you can tell a lot about a person by their trash. The same is true for the “trash” of animals. The first signs of kidney degeneration are evident upon the microscopic evaluation of the urine. Chemical testing and determining the components of the urine is an excellent screen for many diseases. Specific gravity is also determined to assess how efficient the kidneys are working.

COMPLETE BLOOD COUNT (CBC):

Blood analysis allows evaluation for anemia, nutritional status, and presence of inflammation, stress, and inability to fight disease, specific diseases, and clotting defects.

BLOOD CHEMISTRY PROFILES

Depending on the health screen, may contain the following:

- **ALBUMIN (ALB):**
The liver produces albumin. Reduced levels of this protein in the blood can point to chronic liver or kidney disease, or parasitic infections like hookworms.
- **ALANINE AMINOTRANSFERASE (ALT):**
This enzyme is elevated in liver disease.



▪ **ALKALINE PHOSPHATASE (ALKP):**

The liver produces this enzyme. Elevated levels may indicate liver disease or other endocrine disease, such as Cushing’s syndrome.

▪ **AMYLASE (AMYL):**

The pancreas produces and secretes amylase to aid in digestion. Elevated blood levels can indicate pancreatic and/or kidney disease.

▪ **BLOOD UREA NITROGEN (BUN):**

BUN is produced by the liver and excreted by the kidney. Testing for it helps to detect liver and kidney abnormalities.

▪ **CALCIUM (Ca⁺²):**

Increased levels of this mineral can be an indicator of certain types of tumors, parathyroid or kidney disease.

▪ **CHOLESTEROL (CHOL):**

Elevated levels of cholesterol are seen in a variety of disorders including hypothyroidism and diseases of the liver and kidney.

▪ **CREATININE (CREA):**

Creatinine is a by-product of muscle metabolism and is excreted by the kidneys. Elevated levels can indicate kidney disease or urinary obstruction.

▪ **BLOOD GLUCOSE (GLU):**

High levels can help diagnose diabetes and can indicate stress especially in cats. Low levels can indicate liver disease.

▪ **PHOSPHOROUS (PHOS):**

It can be an indicator of kidney disease when elevated.

▪ **TOTAL BILIRUBIN (TBIL):**

A component of bile, bilirubin is secreted by the liver into the intestinal tract. Blood bilirubin levels are useful in diagnosing problems originating in the bile ducts.

▪ **TOTAL PROTEIN (TP):**

The level of TP can suggest a variety of conditions including dehydration and diseases of the liver, kidney, or gastrointestinal tract.

▪ **ELECTROLYTES (Sodium, Potassium, Chloride):**

The balance of these chemicals is vital to your pet’s health. Abnormal levels can be life threatening. Electrolyte tests are important in evaluating vomiting, diarrhea, and cardiac symptoms.

THYROID TESTING:

Determination of the level of several thyroid hormones allows the diagnosis of an under-active or hyperactive thyroid. The thyroid hormones affect weight gain/loss, kidney function, and heart muscle.

Your pet has reached its “senior years” once it has reached the following ages:

Small Dogs (under 20#)	9 - 13 Years
Medium Dogs (21-50#)	9 - 11.5 Years
Large Dogs (51-90#)	7.5 - 10.5 Years
Giant Dogs (Over 90#)	6 - 9 Years
Most Cats	8 - 10 Years
Rabbits	3 Years
Ferrets	2 Years

Our clients will not be pressured to request a **HEALTH SCREEN**. We simply want to offer you the best veterinary medicine has to offer for your pet.

