

Pet Facts & Fancies

Dogs And Cats Are Living Longer And Better

(NAPSA)—Living a dog's life can be a good thing. That's because medical research is finding ways to address the special health needs of older dogs and cats.

Dogs and cats ages seven and older are considered senior, and can make wonderful companions. They can continue being happy, healthy members of the family if owners and veterinarians work together.

"Because pets age faster than humans, their reaching the age of 7 is analogous to a human reaching 50," says Steve Fox, DVM, managing technical services veterinarian, Pfizer Animal Health. "Just as for people, this milestone signals the need for specialized medical attention. Senior pets also benefit from a preventive health care program tailored to their special needs."

One way to keep older pets healthier longer is through what's called a Senior Care check-up. In addition to regular senior health exams for early diagnosis of these diseases, veterinarians rely on educated, observant pet owners.

Pet owners should keep alert for behavioral and physical changes which can signal a health problem that should be discussed with a veterinarian. For dog owners, says Fox, this means watching for:

- limping or lagging behind,
- stiffness after exercise or difficulty climbing stairs,
- decreased tolerance for exercise, or
- change in appetite.

"In dogs, these changes could be early signs of an age-related



For pets, turning middle aged can signal the need for specialized medical attention and preventive health care.

medical condition such as canine osteoarthritis, Cognitive Dysfunction Syndrome (CDS, also known as canine senility), or periodontal disease," says Fox.

He adds that these common senior diseases of dogs can be managed with medications such as Rimadyl® (carprofen) for the relief of canine osteoarthritis, Anipryl® (selegiline hydrochloride) for controlling the signs of CDS, and Clavamox® (amoxicillin/clavulanic) for use in treating periodontal disease.

Pfizer Inc. discovers, develops, manufactures and markets leading prescription medicines for humans and animals and many of the world's best-known consumer products. Pfizer Animal Health has increasingly focused efforts on meeting the special needs of senior pets.

To learn more, call 1-800-720-DOGS or visit www.petnet.com.