

# THE N.O.A.H. NEWS

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## CARE OF THE OLDER PET

Like people, pets are living longer and have a higher quality of life. This is largely due to improved preventive care, advances in veterinary medicine and higher quality pet nutrition.



There have been great strides in addressing the needs in the aging pet. Early detection of disease is the key. Pet owners and veterinarians need to become a team in determining each pet's special health requirements to make the "Golden Years" as happy and healthy as possible.

Different species and breeds age at different rates. Large breed dogs age more rapidly than a toy breed dog. A Great Dane could be considered "older" at the age of 6 years, whereas a Yorkshire Terrier may not be considered older until the age of 9. Cats are "Seniors" when they reach 8 to 10 years of age.

There are many signs of an aging pet;

- Longer or more frequent naps
- Less energy, trouble getting up or limping, loss of muscle tone
- Change in social habits
- Decrease in appetite
- Weight loss or gain
- Dental problems
- Hearing, vision and other senses are less acute
- Poor hair coat
- Constipation
- Increase or decrease in thirst
- Urinary incontinence



As owners of an aging pet we should not assume that our pet is just "slowing down" or that there is nothing that can be done to improve or alleviate these symptoms. Your veterinarian is here to assist you in the management of your aging companions. The first step in understanding and helping your aging pet is to setup an appointment with your veterinarian for a "Senior Wellness Examination". The doctor will discuss with you during the appointment any changes you have noticed in your pet and then perform a "Nose to Tail" examination.

In addition to a thorough physical examination, there are many different procedures that can be done to evaluate a senior pet's health. These procedures include; blood work to assess liver, kidney, pancreas and thyroid functions. The blood is also screened for infection, anemia

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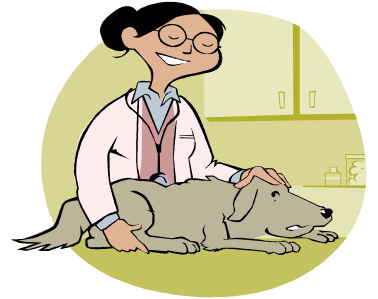
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and proper clotting. Further tests available to us; include an ECG, urinalysis, blood pressure measurements and x-rays of the chest and abdomen to look at the internal organs, including the heart. Following completion of these diagnostics the doctor will discuss all the test results with you and make recommendations of lifestyle changes, medications and special diets to maintain and improve your older pet's health and well being.

Considering our patients age much faster than we do, we also recommend a visit to the veterinarian every 6 months for the geriatric patients in our care. This would be like our senior human family members going to their physician once a year.

A very common aging concern, especially in dogs, is the development of pain due to joint deterioration and arthritis. There are many medications, foods and supplements available to assist the senior with these issues. Caution must be taken before using human preparations for pain and discomfort in our furry friends. Please consult one of our veterinarians before using any human over the counter medication or even one of your own prescriptions.

Communication and education are extremely important in caring for the older pet. No one knows their pet better than you. If you notice changes in your older pet, please do not hesitate to call or book an appointment so these changes can be discussed and investigated. Helping you understand the changes that occur later in life will make it easier for you and your pet.



## *OUR OPEN HOUSE WAS A BIG SUCCESS!*

We painted, cleaned, reupholstered and polished with a deadline in mind. The decision is that it was all worth it!

On Sunday, September the 18<sup>th</sup> we opened our doors to celebrate our 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary with an open house. We would like to thank the approximately 70 people and many pets that came to visit the newly decorated hospital. There was plenty to see and learn as the entire hospital was set up for various procedures, and had explanations for all the different rooms and pieces of equipment. A self guided tour of the hospital provided our visitors an opportunity to see a day in our lives here at NOAH. We had door prizes and games, and photographs of some of our recent patients including an "out-takes" section of pictures of some camera shy patients! For those people that have not met the entire staff, we also had a board with everyone's picture and information about them and their position at NOAH. We topped it off with good food and lots of laughs! The feedback was so positive, that we hope to do it again! So those of you unable to attend this year, keep you eyes open for our Open House announcement in your e-mail boxes!

# WINTERIZING YOUR PETS, AND HELPFUL HINTS FOR THE WINTER SEASON

**FACT:** Winter is fast approaching whether we would like to admit to it or not. Although our furry companions look to have the best coat of all, cold weather can be as hard on them as it is on us.

## **Winterizing your furry friends**

A temperature of 0 degrees Celsius or below is too cold, and our friend's fur coats are not enough protection from the extreme cold our winters can bring. Especially for young or older pets. Our friends, who are used to curling up on the couch on cold days, are not prepared to suddenly move outside in the dead of winter. Like most animals, they need to adapt to the cold air and dropping temperatures. This is the reason for their thick coats and like most of us, in the winter season, we store a little more fat to generate heat. This is especially necessary for those dogs that are outside for long periods of times on a frequent basis. If you have a pet that stays outside, a couple of helpful hints

- Keep your pets inside when the temperature drops below freezing
- Cats can curl up to anything warm, so before you start your cars look for Fluffy.
- If you light a fire or heater, pets will want to warm up too. Be careful not to let them burn themselves, or of course tip it over.
- When your pet has been outside, help keep their paws safe by wiping off any salt, ice, or chemicals that could help chap their paws.
- Elderly pets can have difficulty in the winter with stiff joints. Taking your senior pets out on a leash can help that they don't slip on the ice

## **Seasonal Dangers for Pets**

Although the season can bring such happiness and fun, remember that there are many dangers lurking for our friends to get themselves into trouble

1. *Tinsel* - Cats may enjoy playing with it but it can cause problems by getting caught in their intestinal tract. That goes for those nicely decorated presents under the tree with ribbon. Cats and some dogs do like to chew these and they too can cause problems.
2. Watch the *glass ornaments*, that Fluffy can't bat them down, and Buddy can't knock them over with his happy tail!
3. *Chocolates* are yummy - especially at this time of year, but some can be toxic for our furry friends, or can cause severe gastric problems.
4. *Poultry* - it is that time of year, where we all cherish our turkey dinners, but best to keep it to ourselves. The bones can cause intestinal obstructions, and the nice treat of a slice of turkey can cause gastrointestinal upsets for them.
5. Watch out for holly and poinsettias, these plants might look nice but these plants are toxic to both cats and dogs.
6. Lastly, be careful for those cats who think they can climb the tree!

# ANNOUNCEMENTS AND MORE

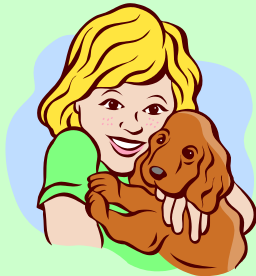
## NOVEMBER - MICROCHIP MONTH

Hopefully, you will never experience the distress of a lost pet.

A microchip can help reunite you and your pet.

During the month of November, you can have a microchip implanted in your pet for \$40.00, a discount of \$20.00 off our regular fee

It only takes a few minutes to have that extra peace of mind.



## Back by popular demand!



## TREAT YOUR DOG TO A DAY AT THE "SPAW" IN DECEMBER

Our "SPAW" Day includes:

- Manicure, pedicure and deep ear cleansing
- Exfoliating, aloe & oatmeal bath
- Brush and blow dry
- Brunch
- Seasonal bandana
- Pet portrait
- Gift bag that includes a coupon for a future purchase

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## WORD FIND

Bed     Nose  
 Bowl    Puppy  
 Cat     Tail  
 Dog     Teeth  
 Ears    Water  
 Food  
 Kitten

Bring in your puzzle to get the correct answers.

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