



Benefits of Preventive Testing for Senior Pets

Evaluate your pet’s health for changes that could suggest serious disease

- Many pets show subtle changes in their blood values over time, which cannot be identified without first establishing and documenting normal values for your individual pet. Your veterinarian can compare results to baseline values established earlier in your pet’s life.
- In some cases, the severity and progression of a disease can be stalled or minimized through diet and/or medication.
- Treatment expense may be minimized by catching a disease before your pet requires hospitalization.

Determine the safety of medications

- Your pet may be given one or more medications. Diagnostic tests help determine which medications are safe and appropriate for your pet.
- Diagnostic tests evaluate your pet’s ability to metabolize prescribed medications.

Provide peace of mind

- You and your veterinary team are doing everything possible to ensure your pet lives a happy, healthy life. Normal test results are helpful and celebrated in older pets! Preventive testing is a fast, easy, and affordable way to verify your pet’s health.

Your pet’s physical exam only evaluates the outside of your pet. Diagnostic testing helps determine your pet is healthy inside, as well!

My Next Appointment

Pet: _____

Date: _____

Doctor: _____

Contact Number: _____

Reason for Appointment: _____



Abaxis is your veterinarian’s total on-site laboratory partner, dedicated to helping your vet help your pet! Ask your vet about how you can get your pet’s diagnostics in under 12 minutes with only two drops of blood.

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1. Adapted from American Association of Feline Practitioners - <http://catfriendly.com/cat-care-at-home/life-stages/>
2. Adapted from Eldredge, Debra M, Carlson, Liisa D. et al. Dog Owner’s Home Veterinary Handbook, 4th edition, Wiley, Ames, IA, 2007.
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A PET OWNER’S GUIDE TO SENIOR PREVENTIVE TESTING



Because of the special needs of senior pets and how quickly they age, it is important that these special family members receive complete physical examinations on a regular basis. The need for vaccinations becomes less important than the need for a complete health screening that evaluates the internal organs, as well as the eyes, ears, and skin.

Laboratory testing is one of the best methods to identify medical conditions that may not be identified through the history and examination. When a disease state is detected early, it can usually be treated faster and with a better outcome. If all tests are normal, then you have peace of mind that your pet is healthy.

Why wait until your pet is not feeling well to test them? Your veterinarian can detect disease earlier with some simple diagnostics.

Testing recommendations

Testing recommendations made by your veterinarian are based on your pet’s breed, age, clinical signs, and history.

- Chemistry Panel, Complete Blood Count
- Chemistry Panel, Complete Blood Count, Thyroid Testing, Urinalysis
- Chemistry Panel, Complete Blood Count, Thyroid Testing, Urinalysis, Blood Pressure, Electrocardiogram

Physiological Age in Human Years

Cat ¹		Dog ²				
Current Age (Year)	Human Years	Current Age (Year)	Human Years			
			0-20 lbs	21-50 lbs	51-90 lbs	Over 90 lbs
6 Months	10	1	15	15	15	15
1	15	2	24	24	24	24
2	24	3	28	28	30	32
3	28	4	32	33	35	37
4	32	5	36	37	40	42
5	36	6	40	42	45	49
6	40	7	44	47	50	56
7	44	8	48	51	55	64
8	48	9	52	56	61	71
9	52	10	56	60	66	78
10	56	11	60	65	72	86
11	60	12	64	69	77	93
12	64	13	68	74	82	101
13	68	14	72	78	88	108
14	72	15	76	83	93	115
15	76	16	80	87	99	123
16	80	17	84	92	104	
17	84	18	88	96	109	
18	88	19	92	101	115	
19	92	20	96	105	120	
20	96					
21	100					

Senior health issues

As pets age, organ systems often begin to deteriorate due to factors such as genetics, breed, and/or environment. Often, the exact cause of age-related illness is not determined. There are many common disease states that occur in our senior pets. Many of these diseases can be effectively treated and monitored with early diagnosis and include, but are not limited to:

- Kidney disease
- Liver disease
- Heart disease
- Dental disease
- Endocrine disease
 - *Thyroid disease*
 - *Adrenal gland disease*
 - *Diabetes mellitus*
- Intestinal disease
- Cancer

Preventive care of senior pets consists of taking measures for disease prevention, as opposed to waiting for them to show they are sick. By the time most older pets show signs that they are ill, the disease may already be in advanced stages. Preventive diagnostic testing provides a detailed look at your pet’s health from the inside, before they show signs of illness. While a physical examination is vital to your pet’s health care, there are many conditions that cannot be diagnosed by only looking, listening, and touching. Much of your pet’s health is revealed with quick, simple, and affordable chemistry and hematology blood tests, and a complete urinalysis.

We use Abaxis state-of-the-art, in-clinic laboratory systems to evaluate your pet’s overall health. Results from these analyzers are obtained in under 12 minutes, and allow for immediate diagnosis and interpretation by your veterinarian.

Chemistry blood tests

Chemistry blood tests provide useful indicators of the health and function of your pet’s organ systems and fluid balance. Chemistry tests may include the following:

Alanine Aminotransferase (ALT)

An enzyme released by the liver when the liver is damaged. Elevations may be a sign of liver damage or disease. ●

Albumin (ALB)

A protein made by the liver that circulates in the blood. Low levels may indicate liver, kidney, or intestinal disease. ●●●

Alkaline Phosphatase (ALP)

Elevations can indicate liver swelling, or decreased bile flow caused by liver disease or endocrine disorders such as thyroid disease, diabetes, Cushing’s Disease, or Addison’s Disease, and may also be an indicator of certain bone diseases. ●●

Amylase (AMY)

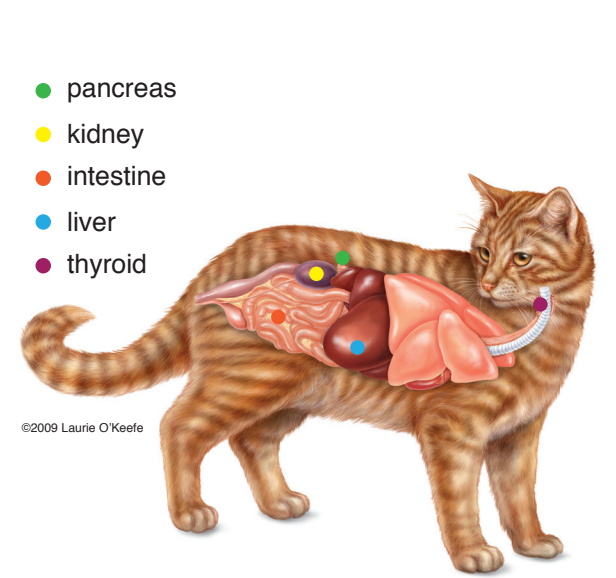
An enzyme produced to help digest food. Elevated levels can indicate disease of the pancreas, intestines, or kidney. ●●●

Bile Acids (BA)

Vital for identifying and monitoring liver disease, bile acids are one of the best measures of liver function. ●

Blood Urea Nitrogen (BUN)

Made by the liver and removed from the body by the kidneys, BUN levels show hydration status and help to evaluate the kidney and liver. ●●



Calcium (Ca)

Elevations can be an early sign of certain cancers. Imbalanced calcium and phosphorus levels are indicative of certain metabolic disease, such as those of the parathyroid gland and kidney disease. ●●

Cholesterol (CHOL)

Changes may be an indication of a variety of disorders, including liver and thyroid disease. Low values may be a sign that the liver is not working well. ●●●

Creatinine (CRE)

An important value to monitor kidney function. ●

Electrolytes (K+, Na+)

Potassium (K+) levels are important for normal muscle function and heart rate. Sodium (Na+) levels are important for body fluid balance. Both are critical to your pet’s health and aid in the diagnosis and treatment of several life threatening diseases. ●●

Gamma Glutamyl Transferase (GGT)

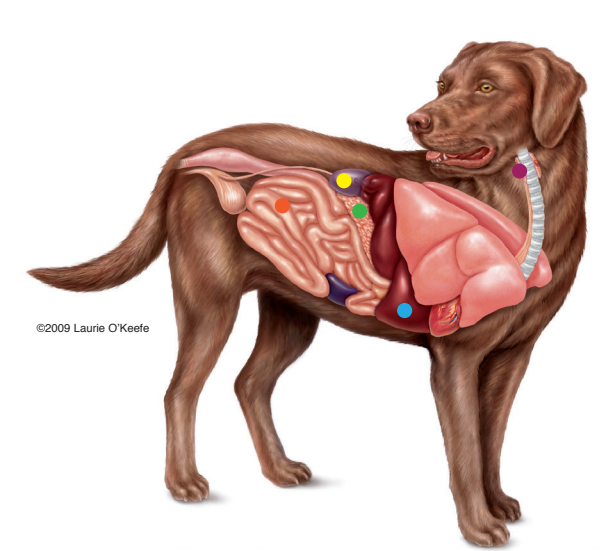
A liver enzyme that helps to differentiate among different types of liver disease. ●

Globulin (GLOB)

A body protein that, if elevated, may indicate inflammation or infection.

Glucose (GLU)

Elevated levels can indicate problems, such as diabetes. Low levels can be associated with liver disease or severe infection. ●●



Phosphorus (PHOS)

Important to monitor for kidney disease, as well as its balance with calcium to monitor many conditions. ●

Thyroxine (T4)

An excellent test for thyroid gland function in dogs and cats. The thyroid glands play a major role in metabolism. ●

Total Bilirubin (TBIL)

An important value to evaluate the liver and when there is a low red blood cell count (anemia). ●

Total Protein (TP)

An estimate of the total protein in the body. Changes can help identify many conditions such as anemia, and diseases of the liver, kidney, and gastrointestinal tract. ●●●

Hematology tests

Hematology testing includes the complete blood count (CBC), which is a test that provides measurements of various blood components. The CBC is an important tool that can detect conditions such as anemia and leukemia, and is also used to assess stress levels, inflammation, infection, and blood clotting capabilities. Blood components measured include:

Red Blood Cells (RBCs) carry oxygen to the tissues of the body and transport carbon dioxide to be exhaled by the lungs. Anemia results when RBCs are not present in sufficient numbers.

White Blood Cells (WBCs) play a major role in your pet’s immune system function. Normal baseline levels are very important to determine the importance of changes seen with infection or inflammation. Elevations can help us treat your pet more effectively.

Platelets are a crucial component of the blood clotting system. Adequate numbers must be present to prevent or stop bleeding. Therefore, it is very important that platelet numbers are known to identify clotting issues before they become critical in the non-surgical patient, and prior to any surgical procedure.

Urine tests

Urine testing may be evaluated alongside chemistry blood testing to evaluate for urinary tract and systemic diseases.

Urinalysis completes the total body assessment of your pet when combined with other laboratory testing. A urinalysis helps to assess how well the kidneys can concentrate urine, if there is a protein loss (microalbuminuria or urine protein to creatinine ratio), and/or if there are any signs of infection or other abnormalities (crystals, casts, and other sediment) of the urinary system. This test is necessary to determine the extent of kidney dysfunction, if present.