



Paws of the Rockies

ANIMAL HOSPITAL

If your pet is 7 years or older, we consider them a “senior.” In people years, your pet is actually 44-56 years old and is aging 4-8 people years for every calendar year.

The veterinarians at Paws of the Rockies Animal Hospital believe early detection and diagnosis are key to optimal wellness. This is exceptionally true when it comes to senior health care. Your pet may be acting fine, but often symptoms of serious diseases or conditions can go undetected with no visible signs until your pet becomes seriously ill. A comprehensive senior care program can help your veterinarian identify problems, often early enough to institute preventative healthcare measures.

We advise a physical exam every six months and a comprehensive blood panel annually to aid in our preventative healthcare program. If your senior pet has never had a blood panel performed, now would be a great opportunity for some baseline testing. Below you can find our early detection recommendations for your senior pet and a breakdown of what can be included on a blood panel and what each item looks into.

Early Detection Recommendations

Semi Annual Wellness Exams

The physical exam is the most important part of your pet’s visit. The veterinarian will assess all body systems to check for abnormalities (ears, eyes, mouth, gums, abdomen, heart, lungs, hair coat, body condition, range of motion of joints, and neurologic function).

Blood Chemistries

Chemistries check the liver, pancreas, and kidney enzymes.

Thyroid Level (T4)

This is a measurement of thyroid hormone circulating in the blood and is helpful in detecting this common hormonal deficiency or providing a signal for other more serious conditions in the body.

Complete Blood Count (CBC)

This is used to evaluate red and white blood cells and platelets for signs of illness or infection.

Electrolytes

These are important in evaluating dehydration, heart symptoms, vomiting or diarrhea. Proper balance of electrolytes should be maintained or serious side effects can occur.

Urinalysis

Urine contains by-products from many organs, such as liver, kidneys, and pancreas. It is important to make sure these by-products remain at proper levels.

Heartworm Test

We recommend this test every year if your dog is on seasonal prevention and every other year if your dog is on prevention year round. This does not change once your pet is considered “senior”. This is still considered important.

Fecal Test

This test looks at a stool sample for microscopic eggs and parasites that live in the intestine and come out through the feces. Some of these parasites can be transmitted to people, but can also cause long-term health problems for your pet.

Electrocardiogram (ECG)

This detects heart rate and electrical rhythm. Certain abnormal rates and rhythms can be harmful if left untreated. If this is recommended by the veterinarian, we can refer you to a trusted clinic that can perform one of these tests and send the results back to us where we can go over the results together.

Blood Pressure

Hypertension, or high blood pressure, can lead to kidney problems, heart disease, blindness and other complications.

X-Rays

Radiographs are used to assess the heart and lungs and/or abdomen for abnormal organ size or tumor growth.