

MEDICAL CARE FOR YOUR PET THROUGH THE YEARS

Dogs and cats age at a faster rate than people so it is important to stay on top of their medical care so that they can live a longer, better quality of life.

As you notice from the age chart dogs and cats are classified as adults, seniors, and geriatrics.

Adult animals should have an annual wellness exam which is a complete physical exam from the tip of his nose to the tip of his tail. Dogs and cats need to have a stool sample examined for intestinal parasites annually. Dogs need a blood sample examined for heartworm, lyme disease, and ehrlichia annually. Adult dogs and cats need to be on heartworm preventative and flea and tick preventative year-round.

Senior and geriatric animals need to be on senior diets. Cosequin and Missing Link are the joint supplements we recommend to help prevent and slow the onset of osteoarthritis as well as treat existing disease. Like any vitamin supplement, Cosequin and Missing Link will take at least 4 weeks to take effect. We recommend these supplements for all dogs and cats over the age of 7 years.

Senior and geriatric animals need to be examined biannually. Our pets' bodies age 3 years for every 6 calendar months. This can make a significant difference in early diagnosis of disease in older animals. In addition to the wellness exam and tests done on an adult dog or cat, seniors and geriatrics need senior and geriatric workups. This helps us catch disease in its early stages so that early medical care can be instituted to keep that high quality of life we want for your companion. Ideally the wellness exam and the senior/geriatric workup would be spaced 6 months apart so that your veterinarian can monitor any major body changes that would affect quality of life.

The staff at the Animal Hospital of Sullivan County recommends an exam every 6 months as well as the following at least once yearly:

1-Basic cat/dog senior workup:

Comprehensive blood chemistry and complete blood count
Thyroid testing (cats)
Urinalysis
Blood pressure
Intraocular pressure/Schirmer Tear Test (dogs)

2-Comprehensive cat/dog senior workup:

Comprehensive blood chemistry and complete blood count
Thyroid testing
Urinalysis
Blood pressure
Intraocular pressure/ Schirmer Tear Test
EKG
Chest films +/- Abdominal Ultrasound (especially lg. breed dogs)

3-Basic cat/dog geriatric workup:

Comprehensive blood chemistry and complete blood count
Thyroid testing
Urinalysis
Blood pressure
Intraocular pressure/Schirmer Tear Test
EKG

4-Comprehensive cat/dog geriatric workup:

Comprehensive blood chemistry and complete blood count
Thyroid testing
Urinalysis
Blood pressure
Intraocular pressure/Schirmer Tear Test
EKG
Whole body x-rays/ Ultrasound

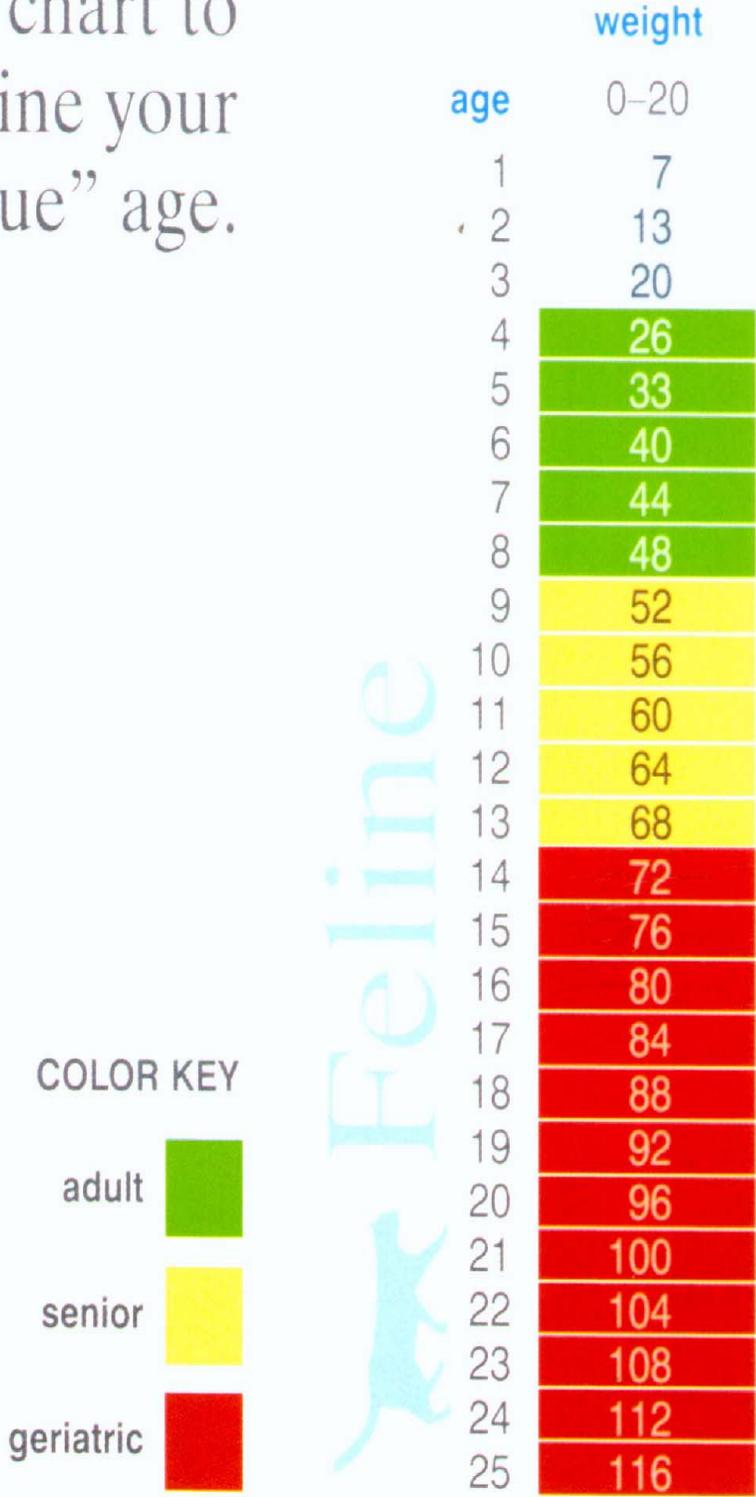
BODY CONDITION CHART- WHERE DOES YOUR CAT FIT?

TOO THIN	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Ribs visible on shorthaired cats; no palpable fat; severe abdominal tuck; lumbar vertebrae and wings of ilia easily palpated.	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	Ribs easily visible on shorthaired cats; lumbar vertebrae obvious with minimal muscle mass; pronounced abdominal tuck; no palpable fat.	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	Ribs easily palpable with minimal fat covering; lumbar vertebrae obvious; obvious waist behind ribs; minimal abdominal fat.	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	Ribs palpable with minimal fat covering; noticeable waist behind ribs; slight abdominal tuck; abdominal fat pad absent.	
IDEAL	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	Well-proportioned; observe waist behind ribs; ribs palpable with slight fat covering; abdominal fat pad minimal.	
TOO HEAVY	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	Ribs palpable with slight excess fat covering; waist and abdominal fat pad distinguishable but not obvious; abdominal tuck absent.	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	Ribs not easily palpated with moderate fat covering; waist poorly discernible; obvious rounding of abdomen; moderate abdominal fat pad.	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	Ribs not palpable with excess fat covering; waist absent; obvious rounding of abdomen with prominent abdominal fat pad; fat deposits present over lumbar area.	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	Ribs not palpable under heavy fat cover; heavy fat deposits over lumbar area, face and limbs; distention of abdomen with no waist; extensive abdominal fat deposits.	

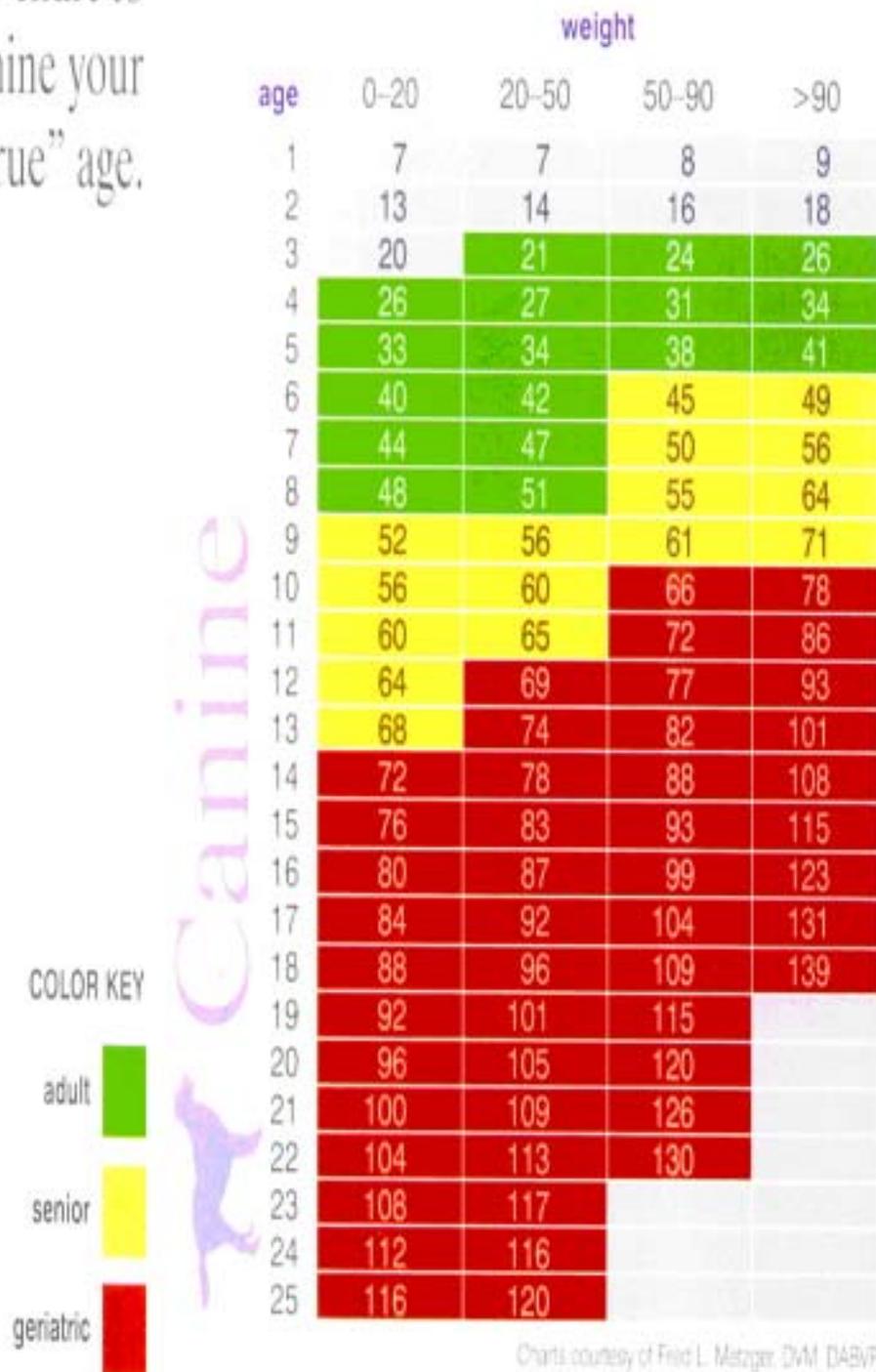
BODY CONDITION SCORE CHART- WHERE DOES YOUR DOG FIT?

TOO THIN	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, pelvic bones and all bony prominences evident from a distance. No discernible body fat. Obvious loss of muscle mass.			1
	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	Ribs, lumbar vertebrae and pelvic bones easily visible. No palpable fat. Some evidence of other bony prominence. Minimal loss of muscle mass.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	Ribs easily palpated and may be visible with no palpable fat. Tops of lumbar vertebrae visible. Pelvic bones becoming prominent. Obvious waist and abdominal tuck.			3
IDEAL	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	Ribs easily palpable, with minimal fat covering. Waist easily noted, viewed from above. Abdominal tuck evident.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	Ribs palpable without excess fat covering. Waist observed behind ribs when viewed from above. Abdomen tucked up when viewed from side.			5
TOO HEAVY	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	Ribs palpable with slight excess fat covering. Waist is discernible viewed from above but is not prominent. Abdominal tuck apparent.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	Ribs palpable with difficulty; heavy fat cover. Noticeable fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail. Waist absent or barely visible. Abdominal tuck may be present.			7
	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	Ribs not palpable under very heavy fat cover, or palpable only with significant pressure. Heavy fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail. Waist absent. No abdominal tuck. Obvious abdominal distention may be present.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	Massive fat deposits over thorax, spine and base of tail. Waist and abdominal tuck absent. Fat deposits on neck and limbs. Obvious abdominal distention.			9

Use this chart to determine your pet's "true" age.



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Since our companions cannot speak to us, recognizing signs of pain can be difficult. The charts below can be used as a guideline. If you believe your dog or cat is in pain or even suspect your companion may be painful, please call the Animal Hospital to make an appointment for an exam.

DOG PAIN SYMPTOMS	
POSTURE	Tail between legs Arched or hunched back Twisted body to protect pain site Drooped head Prolonged sitting position Tucked abdomen Lying in flat, extended position
TEMPERAMENT	Aggressive Clawing Attacking, biting Escaping
VOCALIZATION	Barking Howling Moaning Whimpering
LOCOMOTION	Reluctance to move Carrying one leg Lameness Unusual gait Unable to walk
OTHER	Unable to perform normal tasks Attacks other animals or people if painful site is touched Chewing painful areas (self-trauma) No interest in food or play

CAT PAIN SYMPTOMS	
POSTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tucked limbs Arched or hunched head and neck or back Tucked abdomen Lying flat Slumping of body Drooping of head
TEMPERAMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aggressive Biting Scratching Chewing Attacking Escaping Hiding
VOCALIZATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crying Hissing Spitting Moaning Screaming Purring
LOCOMOTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reluctance to move Carrying one leg Lameness Unusual gait Unable to walk Inactive
OTHER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attacks if painful site is touched Failure to groom Dilated pupils No interest in food or play

A PET'S PRAYER

By: Beth Norman Hauls

Treat me kindly, my beloved master, for no heart in all the world is more grateful for kindness than the loving heart of me.

Do not break my spirit with a stick, for though I should lick your hand between the blows, your patience and understanding will more quickly teach me the things you would have me do.

Speak to me often, for your voice is the world's sweetest music, as you must know by the fierce wagging of my tail when your footstep falls upon my waiting ear.

When it is cold and wet, please take me inside, for I am now a domesticated animal, no longer used to bitter elements. And I ask no greater glory than the privilege of sitting at your feet beside the hearth. Though had you no home, I would rather follow you through ice and snow than rest upon the softest pillow in the warmest home in all the land, for you are my god and I am your devoted worshipper.

Keep my pan filled with fresh water, for although I should not reproach you were it dry, I cannot tell you when I suffer thirst. Feed me clean food, that I may stay well to romp and play and do your bidding, to walk by your side, and stand ready, willing, and able to protect you with my life should your life be in danger.

And, beloved master, should the great Master see fit to deprive me of my health or sight, do not turn me away from you. Rather, hold me gently in your arms as skilled hands grant me merciful bounty of eternal rest- and I will leave you knowing with the last breath I drew, my fate was ever safest in your hands.