

ANIMAL HOSPITAL OF LANESVILLE

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Geriatric Blood Testing

By Dr. Rene Wingerter

No one likes to admit when they are getting old, but it happens to every one, even to our pets. As your pet ages you often just accept it when they "act older". But often your pet "acts older" because **he feels bad**. Many times this pain or discomfort can be prevented or at least reduced by early detection of health problems and treatment.

The "hands on" physical exam your pet receives with his yearly vaccinations is very important and can detect many problems including **painful or infected teeth, joint pain and weight problems**. However, just as your doctor does blood tests to look for diseases like **diabetes, kidney and liver disease, anemia and infection**, your pet can receive better care if your veterinarian is allowed to do these tests too. In fact, since your pet cannot tell you where or even if he hurts, these tests are relied upon even more than in human medicine for detecting disease.

When should these tests be done? In a healthy cat or dog weighing less than 25 pounds, we recommend a basic blood test every 2 years starting at age 9, medium dogs (25 – 50 #) at 8 years and if over 50 #, at 7 years of age. If your pet has any health problems, is undergoing anesthesia, or is over 12 years of age, we recommend more extensive yearly testing. The Veterinarian may also recommend a Heartworm or Feline Leukemia/FIV test, an EKG, thyroid test, x-rays or other tests if your pet is showing signs of disease or ill health..

Even if your pet acts fine, blood work is very important to help identify areas we may need to watch in the future. We can repeat a test and use the results to follow the progress of treatment or the progression of the disease. The earlier a health problem is found, the more likely we are to be able to correct it. Early treatment can also delay the onset of more serious problems.

If you have any questions, please let us know. You can call the Animal Hospital of Lanesville at 952-3643. 🐾