



Pet Talk 🐾 Fall 2024

OAK FOREST

Veterinary Hospital

Celebrating Our Aging Pets

National Senior Pet Wellness Month

September is National Senior Pet Wellness Month—a month dedicated to promoting wellness for our aging four-legged friends. We can help give our senior pets the best possible lives when we protect their health and ensure their comfort.



Most dogs and cats are considered seniors around age seven, although this varies by breed. As with humans, pets undergo physical changes as they age that can affect their health and quality of life. We need to see your senior pet at least twice annually to evaluate these common issues associated with age. We are especially concerned with:

- 🐾 Arthritis and joint pain
- 🐾 Dental issues, such as gum disease and tooth decay
- 🐾 Vision and hearing Loss
- 🐾 Weight management
- 🐾 Cognitive dysfunction
- 🐾 Organ function

To make their golden years as healthy and comfortable as possible, schedule regular check-ups, consider adjusting their diet to foods formulated for seniors, be sure they get regular exercise modified for their age and fitness level, and make dental care a priority.

At home, you will need to make adjustments for their comfort. They may need more warmth and softer padding than they needed in younger years. Providing toys and playing games that offer mental stimulation can help with cognitive ability. Cognitive dysfunction is common in senior pets and can be confusing and frightening for them. Practice patience. Don't scold for "accidents" or for times when they don't obey your commands as they once did.

Your senior pet has given you many wonderful years of loyalty and companionship. Thank them by providing comfort and affection while safeguarding their health in this new season. With proper care, they can enrich your life for many more good years to come. Senior Pet Wellness Month is a time to celebrate our aging furry loved ones!

Goose Honks

Fall Foods We Shouldn't Have

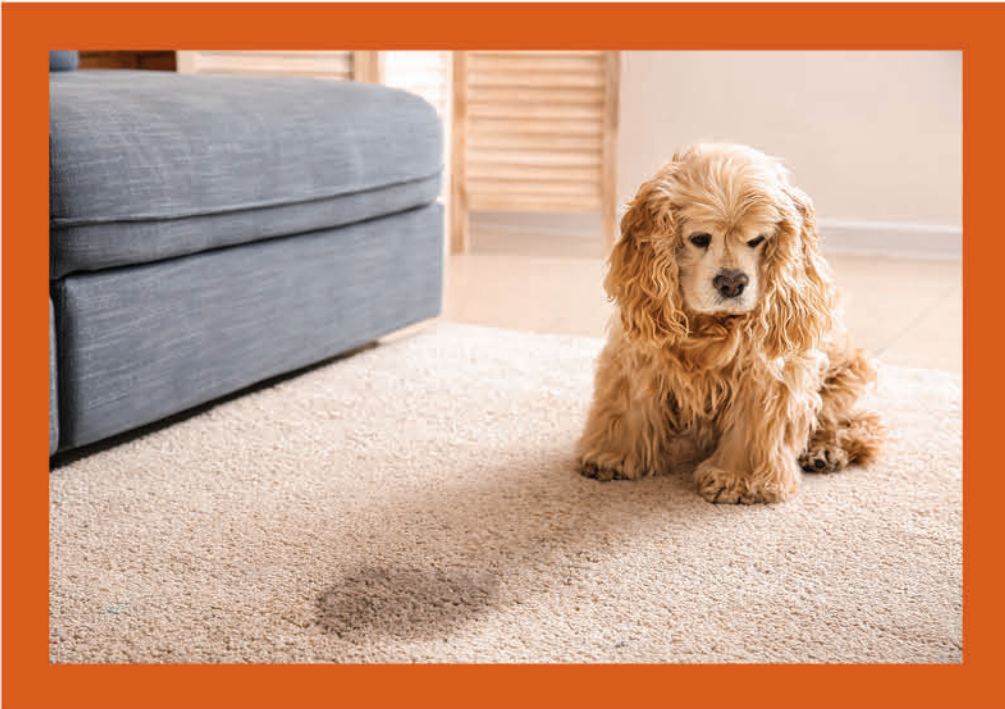
Yay for fall! I love fall. Football (mom and dad cheer for the Aggies), Thanksgiving, and Halloween! Even though fall is a season filled with tasty treats that smell oh so delicious, mom doesn't let me have any. She says it isn't good for me. People food can cause Pancreatitis, which is an illness that can make me sick with a belly ache, vomiting, or diarrhea. Bones, grapes, onions, raisins and chocolate can cause worse things too, like broken teeth, kidney disease, anemia, and the list goes on and on and on and on!



No thank you! I'll stick to eating my favorite healthy treats—green beans and carrots.

Thanks, and Gig'em!

Goose Moore



Incontinence In Dogs

Resolving Puddle Problems

Dogs who leak urine while walking or sleeping or can't control their bladders at other times are suffering from urinary incontinence. This condition can have various causes and, unfortunately, the frustration that comes with incontinence often intensifies the problem both for the owner and the dog. Dogs with this condition suffer doubly when they are spoken to harshly or banished from their normal areas for a problem over which they have no control.

Fortunately, once diagnosed, the right treatment can end or diminish the leaking. We will examine your dog and perform tests to determine the underlying cause. If your dog is drinking a lot and producing excessive urine, we will look for signs of diseases that cause thirst. These include kidney and liver disease, urinary tract infections, diabetes, Cushing's disease, and Addison's disease.

In younger dogs especially, we may look for defects in the "plumbing system" such as the urethral sphincter or the ureters—the narrow pathways from the kidneys to the bladder. Depending on the condition, we may recommend surgery or other therapies.

Another common culprit is hormone-responsive incontinence, which is most often found in spayed adult and senior females. It is more common in large breeds, and medication can help control the incontinence. In older dogs, incontinence can be caused by neurological conditions and other diseases associated with aging.

There are two important things to do if your dog is suffering from incontinence: Don't scold or punish for a condition they can't control, and be sure to bring them in for an evaluation. We are here to help your furry loved ones live their best lives!

Cat Stats

Learn These Feline Fun Facts!

- 🐾 Cats sleep approximately 70% of their lives and can dream when they are in a deeper sleep.
- 🐾 Adult cats "talk" only to humans and not to each other. They can manipulate their humans by making their cries (which are in the same frequency range as human babies) sound urgent—especially when they want food!
- 🐾 Darting in front of and rubbing against a human's legs is another maneuver to get attention and mark territory.
- 🐾 A house cat can reach speeds up to 30 mph.
- 🐾 Our feline friends don't understand punishment. To change any behavior, they must be rewarded for doing it right.
- 🐾 Your cat can hear ultrasonic sounds at frequencies that humans and dogs cannot.
- 🐾 A cat sees about six times better than humans at night.
- 🐾 It was illegal to kill cats in Ancient Egypt. In addition, ancient Egyptians shaved their eyebrows as a sign of mourning when their cats died.
- 🐾 Cats sweat through their paws.
- 🐾 Female cats are usually right-paw dominant and male cats are left-pawed.
- 🐾 The oldest cat on record lived to be 38 years old!



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Call (713) 682-6351 today to make an appointment!

Is Your Cat in Pain?

Know the Subtle Signs of Distress



Many cat parents assume they would know if their fur baby was in pain. Unfortunately, this is often not the case. Your cat has a strong instinct to hide pain or illness because showing pain in the wild would make them vulnerable to predators and competitors.

Unfortunately, by the time your cat is meowing persistently or showing physical signs such as difficulty moving, pain has likely reached elevated levels. Therefore, it's important to notice more subtle changes in your cat's behavior that can indicate pain or stress. These include:

- 🐾 Eating or drinking less
- 🐾 Difficulty chewing or swallowing
- 🐾 Excessive grooming in one area
- 🐾 Looking unkempt, not keeping up with grooming
- 🐾 A hunched posture
- 🐾 No interest in play
- 🐾 Uncharacteristic hiding
- 🐾 A change in personality
- 🐾 Reluctance to jump up to or get down from his usual spots
- 🐾 Purring while alone. It's thought that cats in pain may purr to comfort themselves.
- 🐾 A change in litter habits or having "accidents." This is a symptom of kidney issues.

Only you know your cat's normal behavior. If you notice these or other sudden changes, be sure to call us so we can keep your kitty in optimal health.



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