

The Senior Dogs Project's

Ten Most Important Tips for Keeping Your Older Dog Healthy

- 1.** Establish a relationship with the best veterinarian you can find. For most older dogs, it is advisable to make an appointment with the vet every six months. Your vet should be someone whom you trust and with whom you feel very comfortable.
- 2.** Become informed about the conditions common to older dogs and the therapies used for them. Be alert to symptoms, bring them to your vet's attention promptly, and be prepared to discuss treatment options.
- 3.** Feed your older dog the best food you can afford; consider feeding him a home-prepared diet and two small meals daily rather than one large one.
- 4.** Don't overfeed your dog. Obesity will create health problems and shorten his life.
- 5.** Consider the use of dietary supplements such as glucosamine/chondroitin for arthritis.
- 6.** Give your senior dog adequate exercise, but adjust it to her changing abilities.
- 7.** Attend to your dog's dental health. Brush her teeth daily and have them cleaned professionally whenever your vet advises it.
- 8.** Tell your vet you wish to have your dog vaccinated only once every three years, as currently advised by the major veterinary associations.
- 9.** Be diligent in controlling fleas and ticks, and keep your dog and his environment scrupulously clean.
- 10.** Make your senior dog as much a part of your life as possible, and do all you can to keep him interested, active, happy and comfortable.

(Of course, these ten tips also apply in large part to young dogs, too.)

For more information on senior dog health care, see the Senior Dogs Project website: www.srdogs.com/Pages/care.fr.html.

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