

Golden Oldies



A dog's golden years are a time to cherish, but they can also bring some new challenges with them. Our senior sweethearts often face a number of common health problems related to their advancing age, including arthritis, failing vision, hearing loss and other issues. And while you can't necessarily prevent these problems, you can work with your vet to help ensure your dog is as healthy, comfortable and happy as possible as he ages.

Arthritis

This painful, degenerative joint disease affects most dogs at some point during their senior years. Larger dogs tend to be more at risk, but any size dog can suffer.

A layering / multi action treatment plan for arthritis or joint issues often has the best outcome for the dog. In many instances no one or two things long term will make a huge difference but 4/5 things together can make a huge difference.

Read more:

Supplements:

Good quality supplements for daily use...talk to your vet about the best ones for your dog: some common ones include:

- Fish/krill oils
- Glucosamine/Chondroitin/MSM
- Turmeric paste (golden paste) recipe at <https://www.turmericlife.com.au>
- Green lipped mussel (Antinol, 4-Cyte, Sasha's Blend)
- Vitamin C / Rosehip Vital
- Bone broth

Remember that supplements can take 1-2 months to take full effect! So stick with them!

A course of Cartrophen injections can be very helpful and your vet may also prescribe painkillers.

Natural pain relief can include:

- Dog massage
- Cold laser therapy
- Acupuncture
- Physiotherapy

Exercise can be a huge part of treating arthritis. Hydrotherapy as part of a rehabilitation program can help build muscle strength. It can help relieve pain and inflammation while also strengthening the muscles surrounding the joints. It can also improve circulation, tissue healing and range of motion! Exercise can help strengthen the hind leg muscles - seek advice from a physio on the correct exercises for your dog.

Cones / poles set and wobble cushions can be great for building up hind muscles - remember with exercises it's slowly but surely. No route marches for our seniors with arthritis....do short gentle strolls a couple of times a day.

Restrict jumping - especially in / out of cars and off beds and sofas and stairs - lift your dog where possible, or if heavy invest in a sling to help them and a dog ramp for your car ... this will help ease stress on your dog's joints. A Help Me Up harness can also be really helpful.

In the home

To help minimise slipping on floors get lots of yoga mats or non-slip carpet mats/ runners... lay them all over slippery floors. Make sure you keep the fur under the feet (around the pads) well-trimmed to minimise slipping. You could also look at trying boots to help with grip - put these on each morning and take them off at bed time (to allow paws to breathe).

As important as our mattress is for a comfy night's sleep, the same is true for dogs. A hammock style bed, or a soft bed, would be similar to you sleeping in a hammock, or lying on your soft sofa, when you've got a sore low back. Your dog will benefit from a firm supportive mattress that's easy to get on and off. Memory foam or orthopaedic mattresses can be helpful.

Keep your dog lean to minimise stress on joints....a well-balanced diet is crucial for your senior dog

For more ideas on managing arthritis check out these links:

<https://www.walkervillevet.com.au/blog/what-to-give-a-dog-for-arthritis-pain/>

<https://the-balanced-dog.com/2018/11/18/how-to-help-a-dog-at-home-with-arthritis/>

<https://the-balanced-dog.com/2018/12/13/dog-arthritis-treatment/>