

Aging & Your Pet

Why Six Month Wellness Exams Make Sense

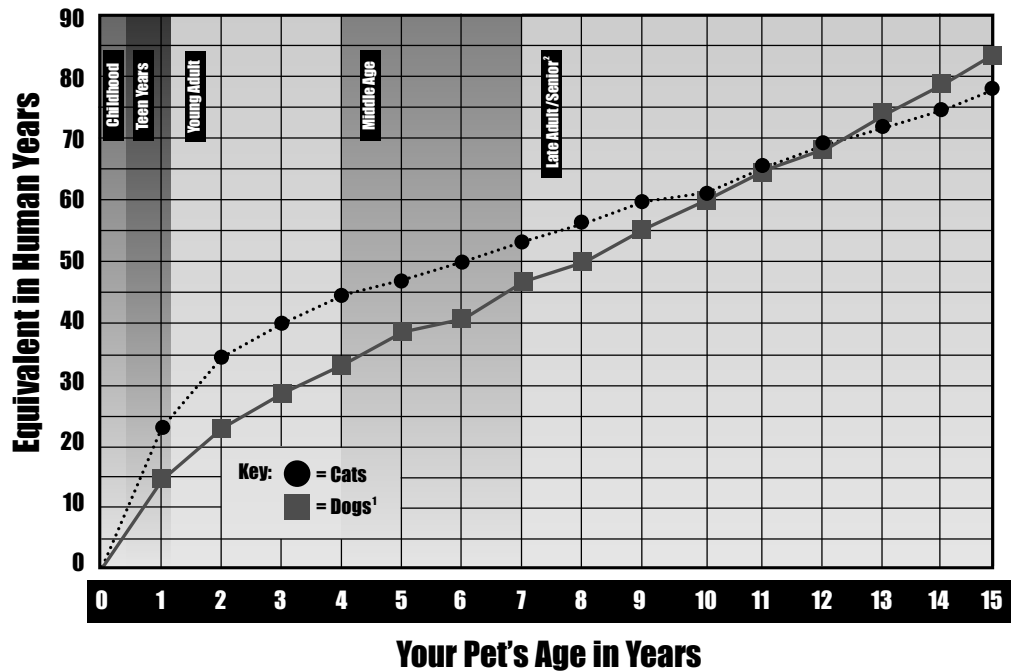
Did you know that by age two, most pets have already reached adulthood? And when it comes to their health care, a visit to the veterinarian every year is equivalent to a person seeing his or her doctor every seven years.

Aging is a natural and inevitable process that we all face. Pets, however, age much faster than people. Today, the average life span of dogs is about thirteen years and cats can live much longer. By the time a pet reaches age four, it's considered middle aged. At the age of seven, many dogs have already started their senior years. Because dogs and cats age more rapidly than people the potential onset of serious illness or disease occurs over a shorter time period for pets.

According to American Veterinary Medicine Association Immediate Past President Jack O. Walther, DVM, "Advances in veterinary medicine have led to an increased percentage of aging cats and dogs in this country. But unlike people, cats and dogs can't tell you where it hurts." Dr. Walther tells his clients that a pet wellness exam every six months enables early detection and treatment of potentially life-threatening conditions.

Pet wellness exams typically involve routine screenings for diseases, a physical exam and consultation with the veterinarian about the pet's weight, dental health, behavior and other issues. The goals of twice-a-year exams are to prevent or minimize disease or injury, enhance quality of life, and maximize longevity.

Pets age faster than people.



¹Based on a medium-sized dog weighing 21-50 lbs. Many other factors including weight and breed may influence the aging process.
²Some breeds are considered "senior" as early as seven years of age.

Pet owners are strongly encouraged to adopt a schedule that includes twice-a-year wellness exams. The sooner a veterinarian can detect a problem, the more likely they can address it. Quite often, routine screenings help identify potentially serious problems like liver disease, diabetes, heartworm disease, kidney disease and thyroid issues. Then, the veterinarian can make recommendations to the owner, and possibly make a real difference in longevity.

In October, veterinarians across the country will celebrate National Pet Wellness Month by helping pet owners learn more about the pet aging process and the health benefits of twice-a-year wellness exams.

October is



Fort Dodge Animal Health