Pet Parents Wellness

25 Questions to Ask Your Veterinarian About Your Senior Dog

A Simple Conversation Guide to Help You Make the Most of Your Senior Dog's Veterinary Visits

Because sometimes the best thing you can bring to a veterinary appointment isn't another Google search. It's a good question.



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A Better Vet Visit Starts Before You Walk Through the Door

Veterinary visits can feel a little different once your dog reaches the senior years. You're still talking about vaccines, weight, and the usual basics, but now you may also be wondering about that slower walk, the extra nap after breakfast, or why getting into the car suddenly requires a thoughtful pause and a running start.

Those little changes matter because you see your dog in a way your veterinarian can't during a short office visit. You know how easily your dog gets out of bed, whether the stairs have become harder, whether dinner disappears with the usual enthusiasm, and whether nighttime sleep has become a little more restless.

That doesn't mean every change is a problem. It does mean your observations can start useful conversations.

It's surprisingly easy to walk into the veterinary office with six questions in your head and walk out remembering only the one about the weird bump behind your dog's ear. That's why this guide exists. Circle the questions that fit your dog, jot down what you've noticed, and bring the guide with you.

Your job: NOTICE → PREPARE → ASK → DISCUSS
Your veterinarian's job: EXAMINE → DIAGNOSE → RECOMMEND → TREAT

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25 Questions to Ask Your Veterinarian

WEIGHT & BODY CONDITION

1. Is my dog's current weight healthy for their age, breed, and body type?

Why ask? The number on the scale is useful, but it isn't the whole story. Ask about body condition and whether your dog's current weight supports comfortable movement and overall health.

2. Have you noticed any meaningful weight or muscle changes since our last visit?

Why ask? Gradual changes can be easy to miss when you see your dog every day. Comparing today's exam with previous visits can give you a clearer picture.

3. How can I tell at home if my dog is gaining or losing too much weight or muscle?

Why ask? Ask what you should look and feel for between visits so you can notice meaningful changes earlier.

BLOODWORK & SENIOR SCREENINGS

4. What routine bloodwork or laboratory testing do you recommend for my dog at this age?

Why ask? Screening can sometimes reveal changes before there are obvious signs at home. The right tests depend on your dog's age, history, breed, medications, and current health.

5. How often should we repeat senior wellness bloodwork or other screening tests?

Why ask? There isn't one schedule that fits every dog. Ask what timing makes sense for yours and why.

6. Are there changes you're watching for based on my dog's previous test results or health history?

Why ask? This helps turn a collection of test numbers into a conversation about trends and what your veterinarian wants to keep an eye on.

DENTAL HEALTH

7. How healthy are my dog's teeth and gums right now?

Why ask? A quick look at home doesn't always tell the full story. Ask for a plain-English assessment of what your veterinarian sees.

8. Are there signs of dental disease that need attention?

Why ask? Bad breath may be obvious, but other dental changes can be less noticeable. Ask whether anything needs monitoring or further veterinary care.

9. What can I safely do at home to help maintain my dog's dental health?

Why ask? Your veterinarian can suggest an at-home routine that makes sense for your dog's mouth, temperament, and current dental condition.

JOINT HEALTH & MOBILITY

10. Are the changes I'm seeing in my dog's movement typical of aging, or could something else be contributing?

Why ask? Slower doesn't automatically mean 'just old.' Describe exactly what you're seeing and let your veterinarian help interpret it.

11. What signs of joint discomfort or mobility problems should I watch for at home?

Why ask? Difficulty standing, shorter walks, reluctance to jump, slipping, or stiffness after rest can all be useful observations to mention.

12. Are there changes to exercise, home routines, or the environment that might help my dog stay safely active?

Why ask? Ask about practical adjustments that fit your individual dog rather than assuming retirement from all favorite activities is required.

NUTRITION

13. Is my dog's current food still appropriate for this stage of life?

Why ask? A food that worked beautifully a few years ago may or may not still fit your dog's current needs. This is a good time to review the big picture.

14. Should the amount or type of food change as my dog gets older?

Why ask? Activity, body condition, health history, and appetite can change over time. Ask whether your current feeding routine still makes sense.

15. Are there nutritional concerns specific to my dog's weight, activity level, or health history?

Why ask? This keeps the conversation focused on your dog rather than on whatever bag, ad, or social-media post happens to be the loudest this week.

EXERCISE & ACTIVITY

16. How much exercise is appropriate for my dog now?

Why ask? Older dogs often still benefit from activity, but the right amount varies. Ask about duration, intensity, frequency, and signs that your dog has had enough.

17. Are there activities we should modify, encourage, or avoid as my dog ages?

Why ask? Your veterinarian can help you think through walks, stairs, jumping, play, swimming, and other activities based on your dog's individual health.

MEDICATIONS & SUPPLEMENTS

18. Can we review everything my dog currently takes and make sure it's still appropriate?

Why ask? Bring the complete list—prescriptions, over-the-counter products, vitamins, chews, oils, powders, herbal products, and supplements. Yes, even the one with the label you can barely pronounce.

19. Could any medications or supplements my dog takes interact with one another?

Why ask? Products that seem harmless on their own may still matter when combined with other medications or health conditions. This is a conversation for your veterinarian.

20. Before I add a new supplement, what would you like me to discuss with you?

Why ask? A quick conversation before adding something new can help your veterinarian consider ingredients, dosing, existing medications, and your dog's health history.

COGNITIVE & BEHAVIORAL CHANGES

21. I've noticed some changes in my dog's behavior. Which changes should I mention or monitor?

Why ask? Pacing, new anxiety, accidents, clinginess, withdrawal, sleep changes, or unusual routines can have many possible causes. Don't assume they're simply part of getting older.

22. What kinds of cognitive changes can occur as dogs age, and what signs should I watch for?

Why ask? Ask what would be worth documenting at home, especially changes involving confusion, staring, nighttime restlessness, social interaction, or familiar routines.

THE BIG PICTURE QUESTIONS

23. Based on today's exam, what are the biggest things you'd like me to watch between now and our next visit?

Why ask? This turns the appointment into a practical plan. Write the answer down while you're there—future you will be glad you did.

24. Is there anything about my dog's health or aging that we should be paying more attention to now?

Why ask? An open-ended question can surface something you didn't know to ask about and helps your veterinarian prioritize what matters most.

25. When would you like to see my dog again, and what changes would mean I should contact you sooner?

Why ask? Before you leave, make sure you know the follow-up plan and which changes shouldn't wait until the next routine visit.

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Before You Head to the Vet...

A few minutes of preparation can make the appointment easier—especially when your dog decides the waiting room is the perfect time to inspect every smell in the building.

- ☐ Write down any changes you've noticed since the last visit.
- ☐ Note changes in appetite or water intake.
- ☐ Note changes in bathroom habits.
- ☐ Think about changes in walking, stairs, jumping, or getting up.
- ☐ Write down any behavioral or sleep changes.
- ☐ Bring a complete medication and supplement list.
- ☐ Bring relevant records if your veterinarian doesn't already have them.
- ☐ Circle or highlight the questions in this guide you especially want to discuss.
- ☐ Leave space to write down your veterinarian's recommendations.

The Three Things I Definitely Want to Ask Today

1. _____

_____

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2. _____

_____

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3. _____

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Additional Notes:

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Notes From Today's Visit

Veterinarian: _____

Date: _____

Current Weight: _____

Next Recommended Visit: _____

Things We're Watching

_____

_____

_____

_____

Changes or Recommendations Discussed

_____

_____

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_____

Questions I Want to Remember for Next Time

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Additional Notes:

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You Don't Have to Become the Veterinarian

You don't have to become an expert in veterinary medicine to advocate for your senior dog. Your job is simpler than that: notice.

Notice when walks change. Notice when appetite changes. Notice when getting off the couch suddenly requires a little more planning than it used to. Notice when your dog's normal routine isn't quite so normal anymore.

Then bring those observations to the person trained to interpret them: your veterinarian.

Good questions won't replace an exam, a diagnosis, or professional medical care—and they aren't supposed to. They help you take a more active role in the conversation. You know your dog's everyday life. Your veterinarian brings medical training. Those two perspectives belong on the same team.

So keep this guide somewhere handy. Bring it to appointments. Write in the margins. Cross out questions that don't apply and add new ones that do. Your dog doesn't need you to know everything. They need you to keep paying attention, keep asking, and keep showing up for them.

Practical Education. Useful Tools. Trustworthy Guidance.

Important

This guide is provided for general educational purposes only and is not veterinary advice. It is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease or health condition. Every dog is different. Questions about your dog's health, symptoms, medications, supplements, diet, exercise, or treatment should be discussed with a licensed veterinarian who knows your dog's individual health history. If you believe your dog may be experiencing a medical emergency, contact a veterinarian or emergency veterinary service promptly.

More Good Days Start Here.

You've taken a wonderful step toward helping your dog age well.

But caring for an aging dog involves more than any single checklist, tracker, or guide can cover.

That's why we created the **Senior Dog Longevity Blueprint™**.



Our free 74-page Senior Dog Longevity Blueprint™ brings together practical guidance for supporting your dog's health, mobility, comfort, and quality of life as they grow older.

GET THE FREE BLUEPRINT

Or visit:

www.petparentswellness.com/senior-dog-longevity-blueprint

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More Healthy Years. More Happy Moments.