

Genius Dog Newsletter

GENIUS DOG TRAINING

"Dogs are not our whole life, but they make our lives whole." Roger Caras

Caring for Your Senior Pets

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No one wants to admit that they are getting older; I think that includes my dog, Wylie. He just turned 11 years old a couple months ago. I think he's been trying to tell me he's not quite the same dog, but like most overly attached pet owners I didn't want to admit it to myself. As a trainer most of my clients don't come to me at this stage of their pet's life, but I wanted to offer a few tips that may help in addressing some concerns you may have with an older pet.

First of all, address any possible medical concerns with your veterinarian as soon as possible, and consider getting a second opinion. We often do it for ourselves, but may not think to do it for our pet. Animal care has come a long way since I had my first pet decades ago and you would be surprised at what they can do these days.



If your pet does require medication, instead of getting it from your veterinarian, consider getting a written prescription and use an online pet pharmacy, or depending on

what type of medication is being prescribed, a regular pharmacy. Costco can also fill pet prescriptions and you don't even have to be a member. You may be surprised at how much you can save by using one of these alternatives. Always make sure you are dealing with a reputable pharmacy and compare prices.

Older pets may have a more difficult time getting around. Whether it is jumping up on the bed to snuggle with you or getting into the SUV to go to the park, you may want to consider getting pet stairs or a ramp for them to use.



Also, as some dogs age their behavior can change. A dog that once played happily with other dogs, may not want to "rough house" with a group of puppies and/or adolescent dogs. If you think about it, even some humans segregate themselves by age – look at retirement communities. That doesn't mean your dog never

wants to play, just be aware that he or she may not be as rambunctious as they once were.

Another thing to consider is your pet's diet. Just as puppies and kittens have pet food made especially for them, so do senior dogs and cats. As your pet ages, they usually become less active, their metabolism changes, and their need for calories decreases. Make sure you are feeding them an appropriate diet given their specific needs and age.



Older dogs and cats may also have a decreased ability to cope with stress or changes in routine. Whenever possible, decrease their exposure to stressors and make any changes in their environment or to their daily routine gradually. Separation anxiety can become an issue later in life for some dogs, vision or hearing loss may compound the problem.

If this is the case, please consult with an experienced dog trainer in your area.

TRAINING SPECIALS

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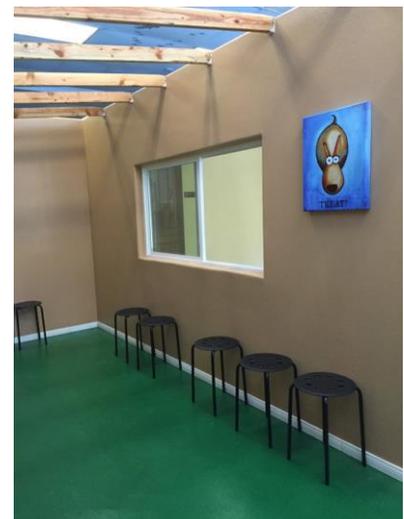
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