

## Pets have a Middle-Age too!



Puppies and kittens keep us busy; accidents on the kitchen floor, chewed slippers and their own special medical needs. Senior pets need special care as geriatric disease like arthritis start to appear. But what about the middle aged pets?

Talk to your vet about **exercise, nutrition and behaviour** recommendations for your middle-aged pet.

### OH, MY ACHING BONES!

Many pet owners are concerned that the cold weather makes it hard for their pet to get around, aggravating bone and joint illnesses like arthritis and hip dysplasia. Pets don't need to be uncomfortable just because it gets cold outside. There are numerous solutions available to keep pets happy and comfortable, even when the snow flies. Ask your vet.

### ALLERGIES

Many people suffer from allergies but pets can suffer from allergies too.

Frequent **itching, ear irritations/infections and chewing at the feet** are all indicators of allergies. Vomiting and diarrhea can also be caused by allergies.

Pets can be allergic to ingredients in their food as well as to things in the environment, such as **grasses, trees, and molds**. Pets with environmental allergies may only show signs at certain times of the year. Other pets may be allergic to things like food ingredients or indoor allergens like dust mites. These pets are more likely to be affected all year round.

Several diagnostic and treatment options exist for pets that suffer from allergies.



**Cat Allergies**, People aren't really allergic to cats. People who suffer from cat allergies are likely allergic to cat saliva. While cats produce several allergens (proteins that trigger allergic reactions, or allergies, in people), the most common allergen originating from cats is a protein called Fel d 1. This protein is found in high concentration in the cat's saliva. While it is also found other places, like in urine and feces, it is thought that the saliva is the main culprit. Cats groom, distributing saliva to their fur. The saliva then dries, flakes off and gets spread along surfaces and through the air.

### HERE COME THE HOLIDAYS

Winter is around the corner as are the holidays. After the holidays we realize a need to diet! It's important to watch what we eat over the holidays because our choices will effect our winter waistline.

It is even more important for us to watch what our pets eat over the holidays because many common holiday foods and plants contain toxins that can be dangerous, even deadly, if ingested by our pets.



### Holiday Toxins

Most people are aware that chocolate is toxic to dogs. Pet owners should take care to make sure that all chocolate, even gift wrapped boxes, are kept well out of reach of pets.

Chocolate contains methylxanthines, these are the compounds responsible for causing the toxicity. The methylxanthines present in chocolate are theobromine and caffeine. Milk chocolate and chocolate products like chocolate cake contain the lowest amounts of methylxanthines. Dark chocolate contains more than milk chocolate and the highest concentration is found in baker's chocolate.

Signs of illness can be seen even when small amounts are eaten. A 10kg dog would only need to eat about 9 ounces of milk chocolate, 3 ounces of dark chocolate or 1 ounce of baker's chocolate to become sick. As some dogs may be more sensitive than others, you should always contact your veterinarian if your dog has consumed chocolate of any kind or quantity.

Here is a list of common toxins that are a threat to our pets year-round:

- > Xylitol (an artificial sweetener found in gum and calorie reduced products)
- > Antifreeze
- > Raisins
- > Nicotine (cigarettes)
- > Amaryllis (especially the bulb)
- > Lilies



### BE INFORMED

Accurate information empowers us to make the right decisions for our pets. Your vet will assist you with making decisions regarding the care for your pet.