

Guidelines at a Glance

Senior dogs and cats represent 44% of the pet population, and they deserve the best care we can offer in their senior years. The 2023 AAHA Senior Care Guidelines for Dogs and Cats help your team create a practice that doesn't just accommodate senior pets, but actively welcomes them.

Let family members know that aging is not a disease, and there's a lot they can do to make their senior pets' golden years enjoyable and rewarding.

Here are just a few of the ways you and your team can become champions for senior pets!

Recognize that senior care is multifaceted and includes:



- Medical and interventional therapies
- Behavioral management
- Awareness of comorbidities
- Environmental modification

Plan ahead for senior pet appointments:



- Schedule extra time
- Discuss expectations and progression with clients
- Offer handouts/resources to support and educate clients

Let your clients and the public know you care about seniors:



- Have an end-of-life care section on your website
- Make sure senior pets are at least 30% of the visual content on your website
- Show videos of the senior-friendly changes your practice has made

Learn how to become a senior pet champion at aaha.org/senior-care.



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Meet Harvey and Gladys



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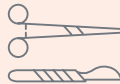
3 Takeaways



- Because of variations in breed, size, lifespan, and species, senior plans cannot be one-size-fits-all



- Healthy and unhealthy senior pets require different approaches to management



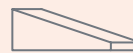
- Staging surgical and dental procedures, when possible, is a viable option

2 Actions



- Create physical space that is senior-friendly, including:

- Designated rooms for seniors that are calm and noise-free



- Use of ramps, rugs, and floors with good traction



- Plenty of padding and soft bedding for seniors in exam rooms, treatment areas, and kennels



- Simplify monitoring and follow up:

- Use videos, pictures, and pre-visit questionnaires

1 Thing to Never Forget



- Senior care is not just about taking care of sick pets! Let your clients know your team is ready to offer expert care and support for their beloved senior family members, no matter where they are in the aging process.