

## Factsheet 3 - Annual Health Check



Cats and dogs are protected against some of the nastiest infections by vaccination. The initial course occurs when they are kittens or puppies, but the immunity given then fades with time and needs to be 'boosted'. Most components of the vaccine are best given annually but some need not - we will discuss what is currently considered optimum for each individual patient.

However, the visit is not just about giving another injection. It is an opportunity to have your pet checked by a veterinary professional each year. Remember that one year in a pet's life equates to several years in human terms, so a precautionary examination becomes more important. Indeed, put like that, pets are checked more frequently than most people go to their own doctor! At Special Friends we encourage owners to be proactive rather than reactive - after all, prevention is better than cure!

The annual health check comprises a full physical examination, weight check and heart check. There will be an opportunity to discuss any matters that you may be concerned about - a particular worry or a behaviour problem for instance. The modern veterinary surgeon is well trained and can advise you of recent advances that may help your pet live longer and with a better quality of health.

Older pets are especially likely to benefit, with many of the ageing changes that we once accepted as normal, being reduced or postponed. A typical example is with larger dogs who, like humans, tend to get stiff joints and arthritis through wear and tear. Heart problems and digestive problems are also now very much easier to treat successfully too.

The main advice we can offer to benefit your pet will include:

**Advice on:**

**Behaviour**

**Mobility**

**Dieting**

**Kidney care (cats)**

**Heart care (dogs)**

**Dietary Problems**

**Parasite control (fleas and worms)**

By bringing your pet to us, we can discuss future needs too, and teach you to look out for changes that may indicate a problem earlier in its course.

From the age of twelve, we recommend a quarterly nurse health check for both cats and dogs. This reflects the greater chance that things may be changing, and should be considered the same as doctors calling older people in for frequent 'wellbeing' clinics. Our service is currently a free service, and all we ask is that you attend for us to examine your older pet. As with people, the earlier we detect a problem then the easier it is to control, and the quality of life can then be restored. So feel free to use this service so that your pets can indeed benefit from the latest developments in veterinary medicine.

***We are your vets - so use us!***