Ray's Little Light

As dogs age, changes can happen gradually and may be easy to miss when you see your dog every day. Use this check-in to take inventory of what you're noticing, identify changes or patterns, and prepare for a conversation with your veterinarian. Think about your dog today compared with a few months ago. Check anything you've noticed changing.

Senior Dog Check-In

Mobility & Movement

□ Slower getting up or lying down
□ Difficulty with stairs
□ Hesitating before jumping on/off furniture or into the car
□ Slipping or losing footing
□ Stiffness after resting
□ Shorter or slower walks
□ Difficulty standing for longer periods
□ Changes in posture, gait, or balance
□ Other: _____

Sleep & Daily Routine

□Sleeping more during the day
□ Restless or waking during the night
□ Difficulty getting comfortable
□ Changes in usual routines
□ Pacing or wandering
□ Other: _____

Eating, Drinking & Weight

□ Eating more or less than usual
□ Changes in interest in food or treats
□ Difficulty chewing or eating
□ Drinking more or less than usual
□ Unexplained weight gain or loss
□ Changes in muscle or body condition
□ Other: _____

Bathroom Habits

□ Urinating more or less frequently
□ Changes in bowel movements
□ Accidents in the house
□ Difficulty getting into position
□ Asking to go outside more frequently
□ Other: _____

Behavior & Thinking

□ Seems confused or disoriented
□ Stares at walls, doors, or into space
□ Gets stuck behind furniture or in corners
□ Seems more anxious or unsettled
□ Increased vocalizing
□ Changes in interaction with family members
□ Less interested in familiar activities
□ Changes in response to familiar people or routines
□ Other: _____

Vision & Hearing

□ Seems less responsive to sounds or their name
□ Startles more easily when approached
□ Hesitates in dim lighting or unfamiliar spaces
□ Bumps into objects or misjudges distances
□ Other: _____

Body, Skin & Grooming

□ Changes in coat or skin
□ New lumps, bumps, or areas of concern
□ Increased sensitivity to touch
□ Difficulty grooming or keeping themselves clean
□ Changes in nails, paws, or foot placement
□ Changes in muscle tone or body shape
□ Other: _____

Comfort & Connection

□ Difficulty settling or finding a comfortable position
□ Panting, trembling, or restlessness without an obvious reason
□ Avoiding touch or certain movements
□ Seeking more reassurance or closeness than usual
□ Spending more time alone or withdrawing
□ Less interested in favorite activities, toys, walks, or family routines
□ Other: _____

Take a Step Back

What changes have you noticed most?

When did you first begin noticing them?

Are the changes staying about the same, or becoming more noticeable?

Is there anything that seems to make things better or worse?

For Your Veterinary Conversation

What would you most like your veterinarian to help you understand?

Are there any changes you want to be sure you mention at the appointment?

Aging can bring change, but you don't have to assume every change is simply “old age.” If something feels different, write it down and talk with your veterinarian. Establishing a baseline and addressing changes early can help you better understand and support your dog as they age.