

Keeping your senior dog mobile



EXPERT ADVICE ON SUPPORTING
YOUR PET IN LATER LIFE.

*Be the one
to help
your dog
enjoy their golden
years.*

Fit4dogsuk Supporting dogs through their years



HOW TO HELP YOUR SENIOR DOGS MOBILITY.

Keeping your dog fit and healthy in their golden years can help limit some of the age-related issues. But for most of our older dogs, it is hard for them to move around as they did when they were younger. However, just because mobility in senior dogs declines over time, doesn't mean their quality of life has too. Good news: there are a few simple things you can do at home to help improve your older dog's mobility.

We will look at ways to improve

- Exercise
- Diet
- Lifestyle

Don't worry; you will not have to give up your strolls around the park or those trips out. This guide will explore what measures you can take with your dog to help them improve their wellbeing in their golden years.

Why does Mobility Matter?

Loss of mobility is the leading cause of euthanasia among senior dogs.

Sadly, many people are not aware of the adjustments to exercise, diet, and lifestyle that you can make to help your older dog and opt to put their beloved pet down rather than see them suffer.

But let me tell you a little secret: you don't have to let your dog suffer.

Encouraging your dog to improve their mobility will benefit muscle strength, joint flexibility, and overall health and wellbeing. Taking steps to understand the problems senior dogs may have and a willingness to make changes will help your older dog enjoy their golden years.

Be the one to help your dog enjoy their golden years.

What are the signs and symptoms of your dog struggling with mobility?

Most dogs are considered to enter old age from around 6-7, and this can depend on the breed.

Most owners notice their dog "slowing down" or being slow to rise out of bed and may not want to tackle the stairs and be less enthusiastic about their ball, games, or food.

Helping identify symptoms will help you to provide a solution to your dog's mobility issues, and here are some to look for.

Signs and symptoms

- Struggling to sit and stand
- Weight shifting to front or back legs
- Walking slowly or limping
- Exhibiting pain or stiffness
- Not wanting to engage in activities which were once normal
- Not wanting to jump or climb (may on the couch)
- Favouring a limb.

HOW TO HELP YOUR SENIOR DOGS MOBILITY.

Common Causes of Mobility issues

The above Signs and Symptoms are indicators and having an understanding of the cause can help with putting together a treatment plan. In most cases it is better to see your veterinary practice to diagnose the cause of loss of mobility and they can point you in the right direction of the best treatment plan.

Here is a list of common causes of decreased mobility so you have a better understanding..

Common Causes of Decreased mobility

Arthritis
Back Problems
Dysplasia
Neurological Disorder
Tumors

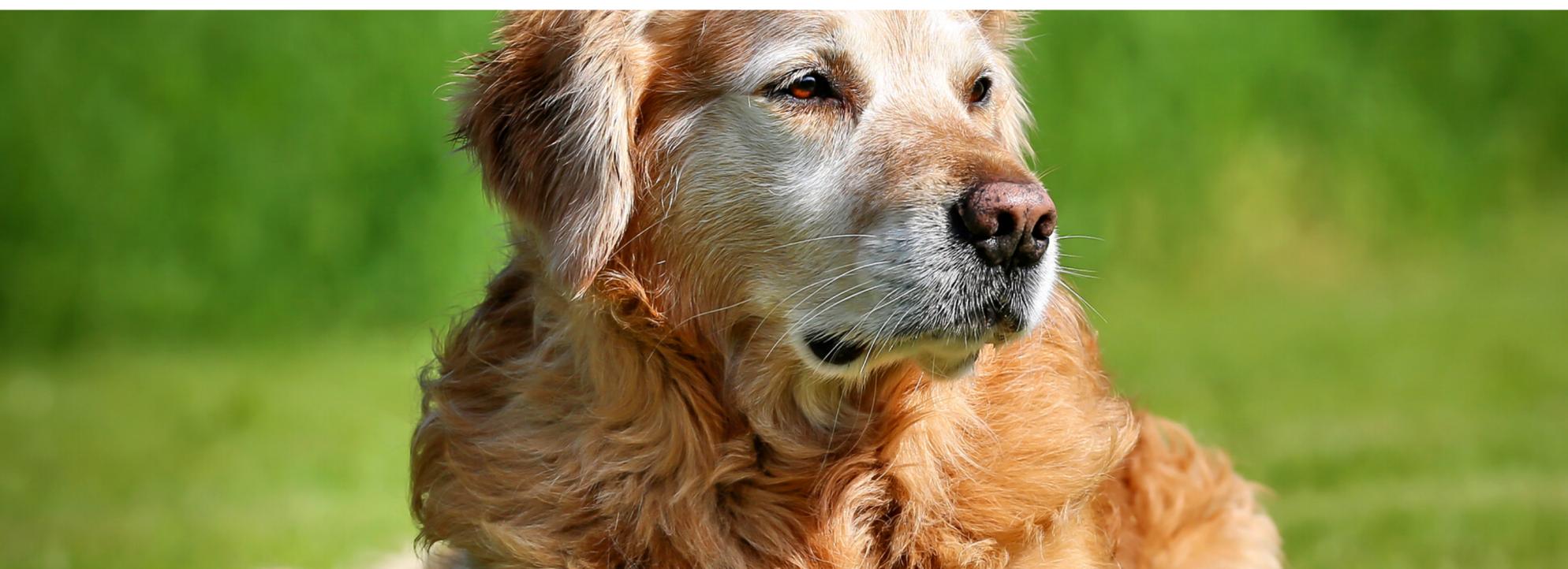
Treatment of Mobility issues in Senior Dogs.

When it comes to treating your golden oldie, it is best to take a varied approach to get the best results. With different symptoms, it may need different treatment an each dog is different.

When your dog begins showing symptoms of mobility issues, there are some things you can do at home to help them enjoy their golden years, help lessen their struggle and pain..

3 Top Tips

To help lessen their struggle and pain
and enjoy their golden years!!!!



1 EXERCISE -

Keep them active

One of the most important things for our senior dogs is to make sure they are getting enough exercise.

If you let your dog to sit or lay around for too long it makes it more difficult to move around, this can also cause muscle loss and putting on the extra pounds.

Extra weight and dog obesity put extra strain on damaged joints.

Exercising an older dog is a balancing act; too much can cause pain, and too little makes the condition worse.

Staying active will help keep your dogs muscles strong, as well as improving circulation to those achy joints. Lack of activity leads to the condition worsening, causing joints to become even more achy and stiff.



Walking – no matter how old they get, dogs will still look forward to a walk. You may have to take a shorter route and make lots of rest stops.

Training -Training – old dogs can still learn new tricks. Training is a great way to keep an older mind active. They'll enjoy the extra opportunities to get their brain working.

Swimming – if your dog enjoys being in water, swimming at a Hydrotherapy Centre can be a great exercise as it decreases strain on sore joints.

Scent games – as long as they have a good sense of smell, dogs will benefit from scent games regardless of age. It's a great way to keep not only their body but also their brain in good condition.

Playing – although their pace might have slowed down your dog can still enjoy playing. Some dogs never seem to lose their fun-loving puppy nature and will still love to play with you. You can still play their favourite game, even when they get older. Try to keep games low and a little gentler so they don't try to jump or twist for toys.

Socialising – dogs are social pets. They might not be able to keep up with younger dogs as well and often get frustrated with puppy antics, but they'll still enjoy seeing and hanging out with dogs their own age that they get on with even if they don't end up playing.

”

My dear old dog, most constant of all friends.

2 DIET -

Caring for your dogs nutritional needs

When it comes down to it, there is no one best senior dog food. It is important to evaluate your own dog before making adjustments to his diet because every dog (especially an older one) needs a different nutritional strategy. Just because your dog is a senior does not mean he needs senior food.

Questions to Ask Yourself When Choosing a Senior Dog Diet

To get a sense of what your dog needs in his diet, ask yourself the following questions to determine which dietary adjustments might help. As always, consult your vet for further guidance on addressing these conditions through diet, supplements, and other lifestyle changes.

1. Does my dog show signs of muscle loss?

A food higher in protein might help; the usual recommendation for senior pets is more than 75 grams of protein per 1,000 calories.

2. Has my dog's appetite diminished?

If your vet has ruled out an underlying medical issue, your dog might find a diet higher in protein or fat more palatable. The same goes for diets with more moisture.

3. Is my dog just eating less than usual? Senior dogs sometimes do not eat as much as they used to. If that is your dog, food with higher amounts of vitamins and minerals is a good idea. This information is not always listed on product labels, but foods marked "all life stages" will often have more vitamins and minerals than adult foods.

4. Does my dog have osteoarthritis?

Look for a diet with elevated levels of the omega-3 fatty acids EPA and DHA (more than 1 gram of combined EPA and DHA per 1,000 calories). You can also supplement with glucosamine and chondroitin, two components of cartilage that are good for joints. Some foods have glucosamine and chondroitin added, but it is usually not enough to make a difference.

5. Is my dog showing signs of behavioural changes or memory loss?

Talk to your vet about a comprehensive strategy for reducing these effects of ageing. A diet with more medium-chain triglycerides (MCTs), fish oil, and/or antioxidants may be helpful. Extra DHA may be particularly important, too.

6. Does my dog have kidney disease or another chronic disease?

A special kidney-targeted diet with reduced levels of phosphorus may be in order.

7. Has my dog been constipated?

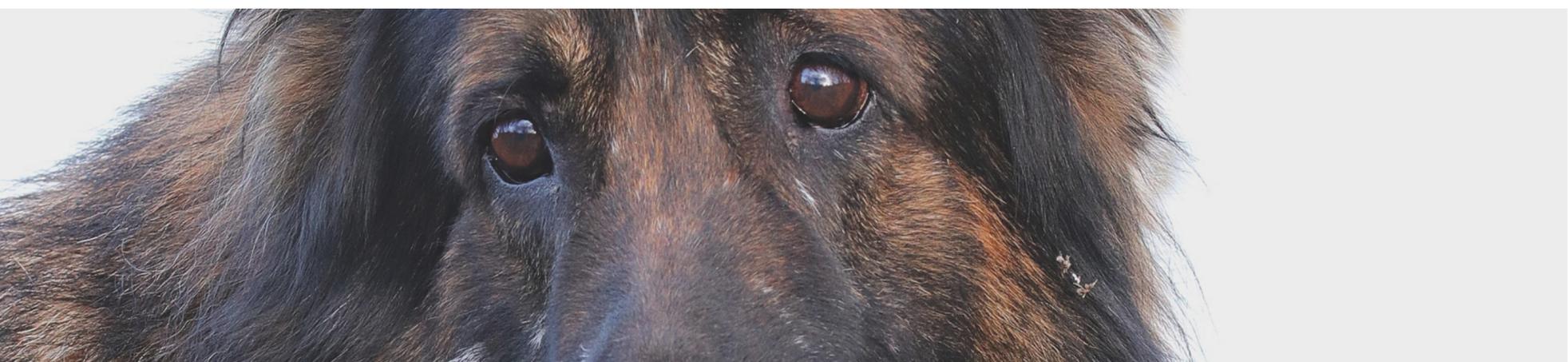
Look for food with extra fibre in the form of psyllium or higher-fibre veggies like broccoli or green beans.

8. Is my dog showing signs of gastrointestinal upset, like diarrhea?

A prebiotic fibre like FOS, derived from chicory root, may help to normalise the bacteria in his gut. Because crude fibre on product labels only describes insoluble fibre, the type that adds bulk to the stool, you need to look more closely at the label for soluble, or prebiotic, fibres (e.g. fructooligosaccharides, chicory root, inulin, and fruit pectins).

9. Does my dog have a history of chronic pancreatitis? A lower-fat diet may help. Otherwise, most healthy senior dogs do quite well on high-fat diets, as long as you control **the portions.**

10. Is my dog drinking less water than usual? Some senior dogs do not drink enough water due to kidney disease or behavioural changes. In these cases, foods higher in moisture (canned or fresh) can help them get the extra hydration they need.



1 LIFESTYLE

Changes at home



As your dog gets older, it is important to keep your dogs mind and body comfortable to ensure their senior years are fruitful, happy and healthy

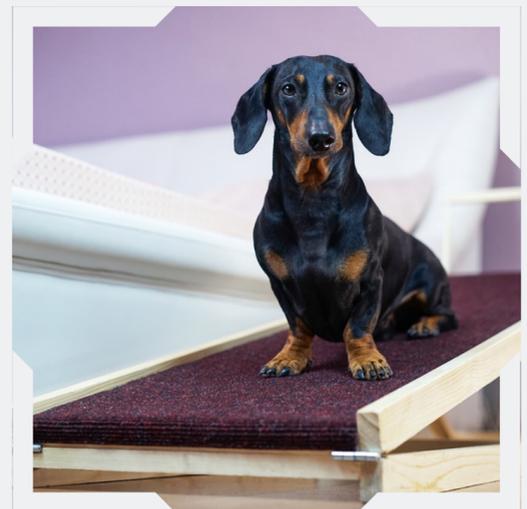


Dogs Beds

As our dogs get a little older it is important to have the right bed to aid in rest and recovery. It is important to choose a bed that is firm and is water resistant with cover that is machine washable (just in case of a little accident). An orthopaedic or Memory form bed is the best and in a draft free position. Avoid hammock style beds.

Dog Ramp

if it is for your dog to access the bed or to get in and out of the car it is important to support your dog to prevent further injury.



Slippy floors

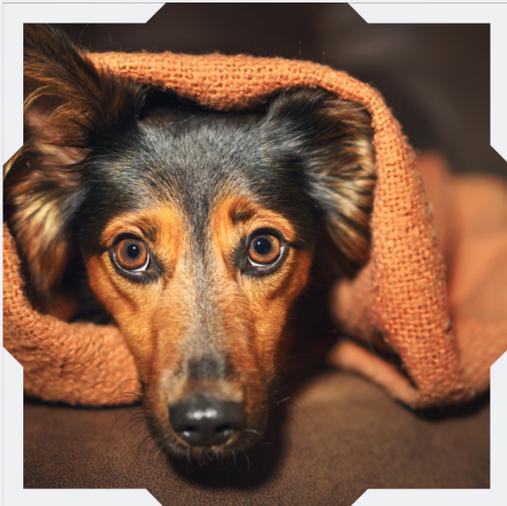
Dogs can be injured from slipping on smooth flooring such as laminate, tile and hardwood. They are easy to clean but your dogs paws were not designed to walk on such surfaces.

5 ways to prevent slips and falls.

- Keep nails short
- Place runners or rugs through main traffic areas
- non slip socks to provide traction.
- putting a mat down where they like to nap or rest

1 LIFESTYLE

Changes at home



Warming blanket

Heated beds are a great choice, as the warmth works to relieve aches and pains. Heating can be done via various methods – some like heated blankets that need to be plugged in the wall, others can be pre-heated in a microwave and they keep that warmth for some time, while others reflect and retain dog's own body heat. If your dog is struggling with the cold, heated bedding could be the way to go.

Raised dog bowl

Raised dog bowls can also be more comfortable for older dogs with stiff necks or backs, reducing the movement needed at mealtimes. Choose a single or double raised dog bowl and provide your pet with a cleaner, more comfortable way to eat



References

A Top Reason for Euthanasia - How to Help Avoid

<https://healthypets.mercola.com/sites/healthypets/archive/2016/06/24/lack-of-mobility-senior-pets.aspx>

How to Care for Your Senior Dog

<https://www.thesprucepets.com/how-to-care-for-senior-dogs-1118540>

How to Help Mobility in Senior Dogs

<https://vetericyn.com/blog/how-to-help-mobility-in-senior-dogs/>



Check list



- Exercise
- Diet
- Lifestyle
- Bed
- Dog Ramp
- Flooring
- Warming Blanket
- Raised Food Bowl

*Be the one to help your dog enjoy
their golden years.*