

## Top Tips for Senior Dog Comfort

**Simple changes make your senior dog more comfortable.**

*Teri Goodman*

Posted: Tue Jun 28 00:00:00 PDT 2005

Around the age of seven or eight, depending on size and breed, your dog will appreciate some special treatment. Of all the things you can do, nothing ranks higher than keeping him trim and in shape by attending to:

**Nutrition** Older dogs with decreasing muscle mass burn fewer calories, causing weight gain, yet they need better nourishment than ever as they age. Research has shown, as well, that, in dogs with arthritis, mobility improves with weight control. Choose a high-quality, highly digestible food. Adjust quantities as needed to maintain ideal weight. Divide daily food allowance into two or more meals. Attend to dental hygiene with daily brushing and professional cleaning by your veterinarian.

**Exercise** Keep your older dog active to control weight, maintain muscle mass, improve circulation and mobility, and provide mental stimulation. Modify activities to accommodate decreasing abilities and less resilient joints. A few examples: Avoid big jumps, throw fetch toys a shorter distance, do several shorter exercise sessions or walks rather than a long one. Modify or skip activity in extreme weather, such as cold, rain, humidity, or heat. Find therapies for arthritis pain as needed. These may include glucosamine and chondroitin, acupuncture, massage, or medication recommended by your veterinarian.