

Expectancy of Cats and Dogs

This is one of the most frequently asked and sometimes most difficult question a vet faces. Clients ask about the expected life span of a particular breed or species. Like people, an animal's life expectancy can vary tremendously, and like us, our pet's expected life span has increased with better nutrition, medical care, and general knowledge of their needs.

Some pets have fairly short life spans. Rats average one to two years, Guinea pigs about six to eight years. If you're middle-aged and own a parrot, you might want to leave him to someone in your will. These birds can live up to 30 years and well beyond.

People most commonly ask about how long they can expect to have their dog or cat. The concern and fear of losing a much-loved pet usually motivate the question. Cats, on average, live to their early teens. Exceptions are common, and we have treated cats at twenty-four years of age.

Dogs tend to follow the old saying "The bigger they are, the harder they fall." Great Danes and other giant breeds rarely live beyond seven to nine years. Rottweilers and other heavy breeds usually live only into the early teens. Little mixed breeds often survive into their late teens. All of this of course depends on good health and especially good dental health, which in turn is related to diet, exercise and general care. We recommend annual blood and urine tests for early detection of disease in geriatric animals.

Remember, on average, a year in our life is the equivalent to seven years in a cat or dogs life. A lot can happen during this time especially in older pets. If we were to avoid the dentist or doctor for seven years at a time, we could end up with something serious that could have been easily dealt with if picked up at an early stage. Never be afraid to consult your Vet for advice. We are there to help and provide the best of medical care for your pet at all times.

Kind Regards,

Scott & Chris