



**Good Friends  
Animal  
Hospital**

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### ***Why Does My Senior Pet Need Laboratory Tests?***

For all dogs and cats over 8 years old, laboratory tests are an important way to measure their overall health. With early detection many health problems are successfully treated and we can help your pet live longer. If your pet is to be anesthetized, laboratory tests provide valuable information on how their body will adapt to this procedure. The tests most commonly performed are a CBC (complete blood count), a blood chemistry profile and urinalysis (examination of the urine). Cats should also have their thyroid level checked.

A CBC can tell us:

1. If your pet is anemic (not enough red blood cells);
2. The blood protein level, which indicates how well your pet may heal after surgery;
3. If an infection is present;
4. If the immune system seems to be normal and;
5. If there are enough platelets which help with blood clotting.

Blood chemistries review kidney and liver function, electrolytes and glucose levels. The kidneys and liver are the primary organs that remove anesthetics. It is important to know that they are functioning adequately before your pet is anesthetized. In the early stages, kidney and liver problems do not always have obvious symptoms. Laboratory tests help with early detection of these diseases before much organ damage occurs. We can then prescribe special diets or supplements to help support the damaged organs and slow down their deterioration.

Examination of your pet's urine provides a more thorough evaluation of kidney function and can indicate kidney disease much earlier than blood tests do. It can indicate diabetes and liver problems. Cats are prone to hyperthyroidism and should have a thyroid evaluation. Hyperthyroidism is a disease where the thyroid gland becomes over-active. It is a very serious life-threatening disease.