

Your Senior Cat and the Senior Blood Analysis

So, your cat has turned 7 years of age, and now your veterinarian is saying that part of kitty's annual checkup must now include a senior (or geriatric) blood analysis. What does this mean, besides that the vet is probably going to charge more for a senior blood analysis, than one done for your cat in its younger years?

What is a Senior Cat?

Your cat becomes a senior cat when it reaches 7 years of age. There are different levels of senior cats. A cat is a *young senior* from age 7 to 11 years, and becomes an *older senior* after the age of 12 years.

What does the senior blood analysis reveal?

Your veterinarian is looking to see if any of the following three ailments commonly found in senior cats is present in your cat.

- Kidney Disease
- Hyperthyroidism (or overactive thyroid)
- Diabetes

If your cat has any of these ailments, they are all treatable and your vet will advise you on the best course of action for your cat.

Along with a blood analysis, your cat's *blood pressure* should be checked because high blood pressure is also common in senior cats. High blood pressure may indicate that your cat has other forms of heart disease.

Why is it important to get a Senior Blood Analysis?

It is wise to have a senior blood analysis done for your cat when it turns 7 years old, so that a baseline of the cat's health can be established. As your cat ages, any changes in their health can be compared to the baseline. It provides the veterinarian with a comparison, and helps them to make the best decisions for your cat's medical care.

How often should a Senior Blood Analysis be done?

Many veterinarians think that it should be mandatory for all cat owners to have their senior cat's blood tested once a year. There are several health problems common amongst senior cats that can be diagnosed in the early stages, simply by doing a blood test. Another reason for mandatory testing is because cats are very good at hiding illness, and often don't show any obvious signs that they are unwell, until it is too late to help them. By the time your cat turns 10, your vet may recommend that you bring them in for testing every 6 months.

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