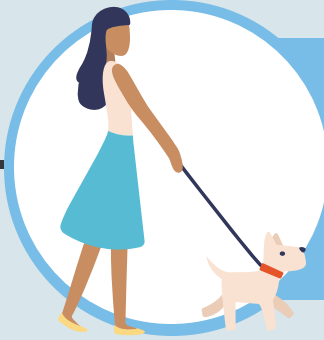
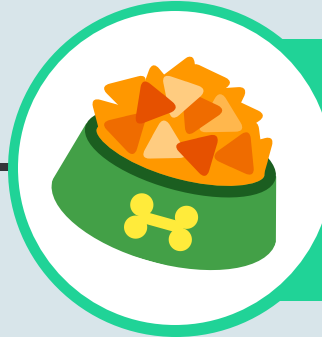


**Changes in interaction:**  
hiding from family members/other animals, less desire to play or cuddle, sudden bursts of anger or aggression when being touched



**Decreased mobility:**  
less excitement to go on walks, travelling shorter distances on walks, takes longer to stand up, no longer able to jump on furniture



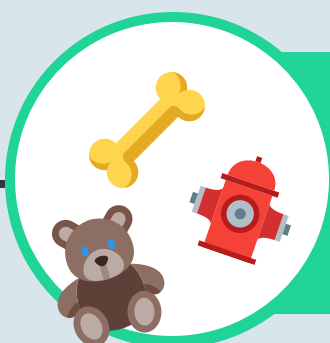
**Decreased appetite:**  
eating smaller portions, becoming pickier or only eating treats, less enthusiasm around mealtime, requires hand feeding



**Altered bathroom habits:**  
more accidents in the house, less or more frequent "bathroom breaks", struggles posturing to pass bowel movements



**Dehydration:**  
decreased interest/intake of water, sunken eyes, sticky textured gums, decreased skin elasticity



**Disinterest/disengagement:**  
less excited (or even completely ignoring) favourite toys, treats, places, and people.

# Monitoring Quality of Life in Your Aging Pets

As the furry members of your family get older, it becomes increasingly important to watch for signs of pain and discomfort. This is harder than it may at first seem, since animals cannot tell us where and what is hurting. This is a list of the more common body language and behavioural changes that may indicate a decreased quality of life in your older pet.

You may want to track changes in these behaviours using a journal or calendar, to better understand shifts over time. If you notice one or more of the above signs in your animal, talk to your veterinarian; they can work with you to provide pain control options, environmental modifications to increase comfort at home, or discuss the possibility of humane euthanasia to relieve suffering.