



Four Pillars to Help Your Dog Live a Longer, Healthier Life

A practical guide for dog owners

1. Nutrition That Supports Healthy Aging

- Choose **high-quality protein** to maintain muscle as dogs age.
 - Add **omega-3 fatty acids** (fish oil) to support joints and brain health.
 - Ask your veterinarian about **SAMe, glucosamine, and chondroitin**.
 - Keep your dog at a **lean, healthy weight**—extra pounds shorten lifespan.
 - Offer **healthy treats** like carrots, green beans, or low-calorie options.
-

2. Preventive Care You Can Start Today

- Schedule **veterinary checkups every 6 months** to catch issues early.
 - Practice **daily dental care**—brushing teeth helps prevent disease.
 - Watch for signs of **cognitive decline** (confusion, sleep changes, accidents).
 - Stay current on **vaccinations, parasite prevention, and bloodwork**.
-

3. Physical & Mental Enrichment

- Choose **gentle, regular exercise**: sniff walks, swimming, short hikes.
- Keep your dog's mind active with **puzzle toys, training, and new experiences**.
- Rotate toys and activities to keep things interesting.
- Remember: **old dogs can learn new tricks**, and it's great for their brain.

4. Regular Monitoring & Partnership with Your Vet

- Track your dog's **weight, appetite, mobility, and behavior** over time.
- Establish a **baseline** for lab work and update it regularly.
- Share any changes—big or small—with your veterinarian.
- Be your dog's advocate: ask questions, take notes, and stay involved.

Small Habits Make a Big Difference

Supporting your dog's health doesn't require big changes, rather steady, thoughtful care. Nutrition, preventive health, enrichment, and monitoring work together to help your dog stay happy, active, and comfortable for as long as possible.

Content was selected from:

[Four pillars approach to achieving longevity in canine patients, IVC Journal, January 28, 2026.](#)