



## Benefits of Preventive Testing for Senior Cats

### Evaluate your pet's health for changes that could suggest serious disease

- Many cats show subtle changes in their blood values over time, which cannot be identified without first establishing normal values for your individual cat. Your veterinarian can compare results to baseline values established earlier in your cat's life.
- Cats often hide signs of illness, and many diseases begin before your cat actually appears sick. Regular diagnostic testing can help catch the disease earlier.
- In some cases, the severity and progression of a disease can be improved through diet and/or medication.
- Treatment expense may be minimized by catching a disease before your cat requires hospitalization.

### Determine the safety of medications

- Your cat may be given one or more medications. Diagnostic tests help determine which medications are safe and appropriate for your cat.
- Diagnostic tests evaluate your cat's ability to metabolize prescribed medications.

### Provide peace of mind

- You and your veterinary team are doing everything possible to ensure your cat lives a happy, healthy life. Normal test results are helpful and celebrated in older cats! Preventive testing is a fast, easy, and affordable way to verify your cat's health.

Your cat's physical exam only evaluates the outside of your cat. Diagnostic testing helps determine your cat is healthy inside, as well!

## My Next Appointment

Pet: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Appointment: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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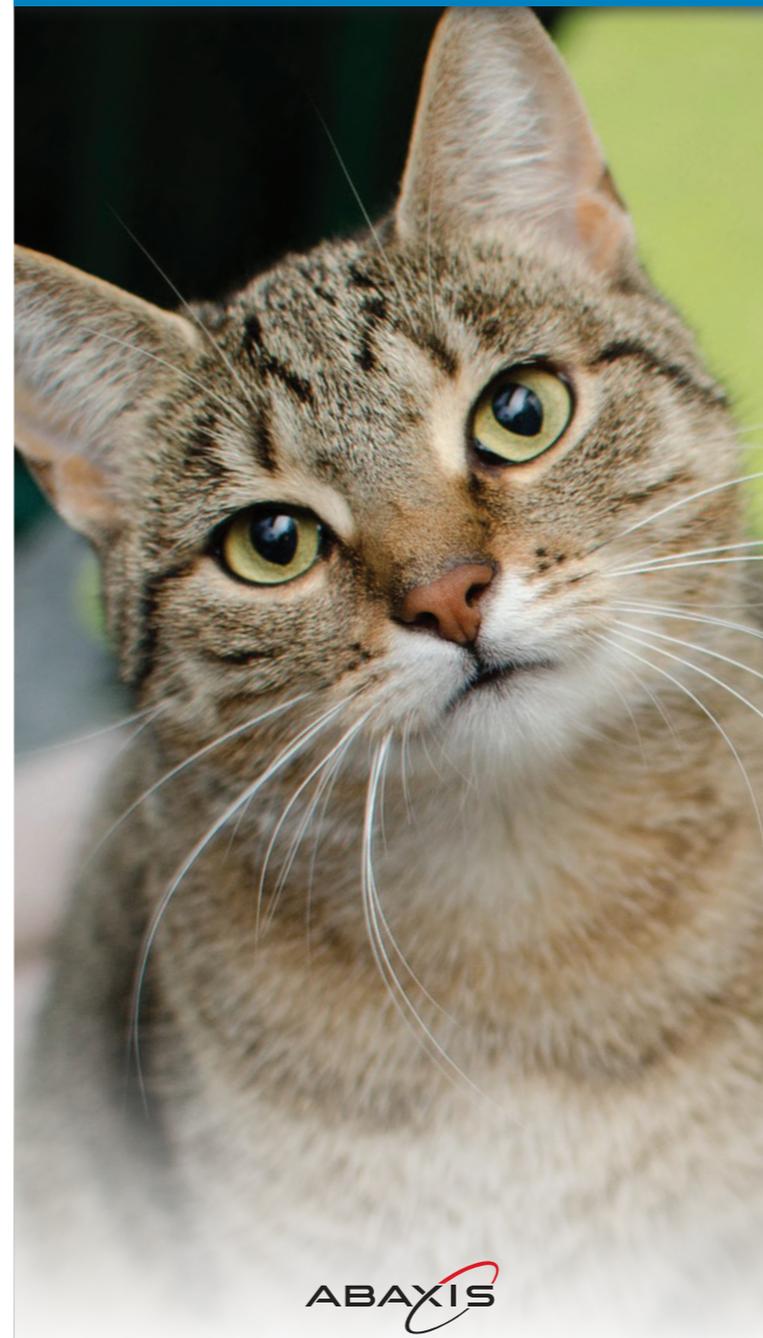
Abaxis is your veterinarian's total on-site laboratory partner, dedicated to helping your vet help your pet! Ask your vet about how you can get your pet's diagnostics in under 12 minutes with only two drops of blood.

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1. Adapted from American Association of Feline Practitioners - <http://catfriendly.com/cat-care-at-home/life-stages/>

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# A CAT OWNER'S GUIDE TO SENIOR PREVENTIVE TESTING



Because of the special needs of senior cats and how quickly they age, it is important that these special family members a complete physical examination on a regular basis. The need for vaccinations becomes less important than the need for a complete health screening that evaluates the internal organs, as well as the eyes, ears, and skin.

Laboratory testing is one of the best methods to identify medical conditions that may not be identified through history and physical examination. When a disease state is detected early, it can usually be treated faster and with a better outcome. If all tests are normal, then you have peace of mind that your cat is healthy.

Why wait until your cat is not feeling well to test them? Your veterinarian can detect disease earlier with some simple diagnostics.

## Testing recommendations

Testing recommendations made by your veterinarian are based on your cat's breed, age, clinical signs, and history.

- Chemistry Panel, Complete Blood Count
- Chemistry Panel, Complete Blood Count, Thyroid Testing, Urinalysis
- Chemistry Panel, Complete Blood Count, Thyroid Testing, Urinalysis, Blood Pressure, Electrocardiogram

### Physiological Age in Human Years

Cat <sup>1</sup>		
Current Age (Year)	Human Years	Life Stage
6 Months	10	Kitten
1	15	Junior
2	24	
3	28	Prime
4	32	
5	36	
6	40	Mature
7	44	
8	48	
9	52	
10	56	Senior
11	60	
12	64	
13	68	Geriatric
14	72	
15	76	
16	80	
17	84	
18	88	
19	92	
20	96	
21	100	

## Senior health issues

As cats age, organ systems often begin to deteriorate, due to factors such as genetics, breed, and/or environment. Often the exact cause of age-related illness cannot be determined. There are many common disease states that occur in senior cats. Many of these diseases can be effectively treated and monitored with early diagnosis and include, but are not limited to:

- Kidney disease
- Liver disease
- Heart disease
- Dental disease
- Endocrine disease
  - Thyroid disease
  - Adrenal gland disease
  - Diabetes mellitus
- Intestinal disease
- Cancer

Preventive care of senior cats consists of taking measures for disease prevention, as opposed to waiting for them to show that they are sick. By the time most older cats show signs they are ill, the disease may already be in advanced stages. Preventive diagnostic testing provides a detailed look at your cat's health from the inside, before they show signs of illness. While a physical examination is vital to your cat's health care, there are many conditions that cannot be diagnosed by only looking, listening, and touching; felines especially hide disease and pain until the pain or disease has progressed to an advanced stage. Much of your cat's health is revealed with quick, simple, and affordable chemistry and hematology blood tests, and a complete urinalysis.

Your veterinarian can detect subtle changes and possible diseases or pain at an earlier stage through regular visits and laboratory testing. By intervening earlier, there are more treatment options available, and we may be able to slow the progression of the disease.

We use Abaxis state-of-the-art, in-clinic laboratory systems to evaluate your cat's overall health. Results from these analyzers are obtained in under 12 minutes, and allow for immediate diagnosis and interpretation by your veterinarian.

## Chemistry blood tests

Chemistry blood tests provide useful indicators of the health and function of your cat's organ systems and fluid balance. Chemistry tests may include the following:

### Alanine Aminotransferase (ALT)

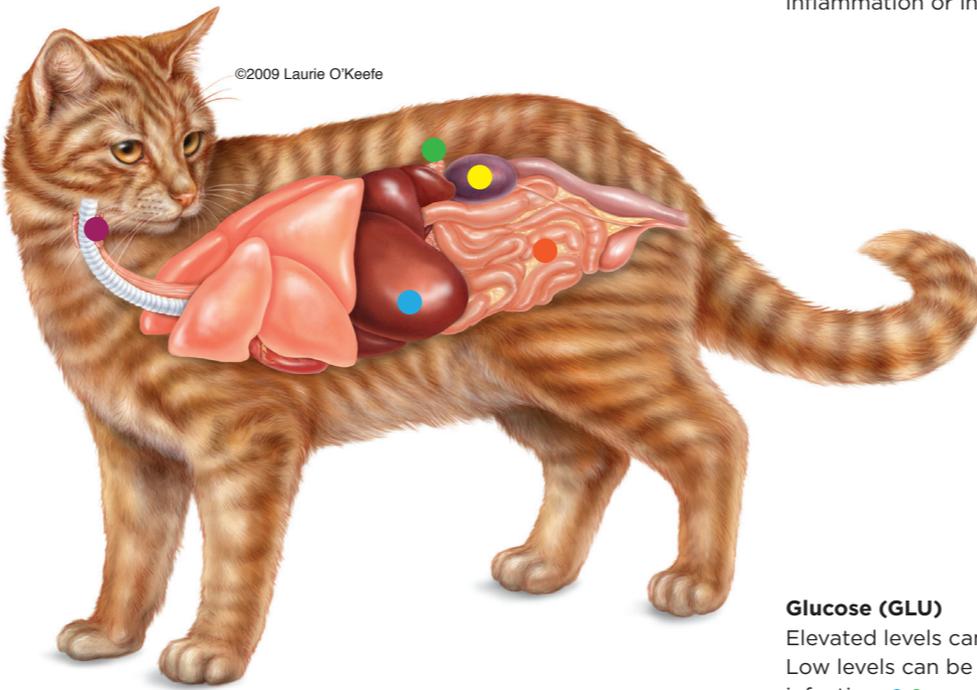
An enzyme released by the liver when the liver is damaged. Elevations may be a sign of liver damage or disease. ●

### Albumin (ALB)

A protein made by the liver that circulates in the blood. Low levels can indicate liver, kidney, or intestinal disease. ●●●

### Alkaline Phosphatase (ALP)

Elevations can indicate liver damage, with decreased bile flow or endocrine disorders. ●●



### Amylase (AMY)

An enzyme produced to help digest food. Elevated levels can indicate disease of the pancreas, intestines, or kidney. ●●●

### Blood Urea Nitrogen (BUN)

Made by the liver and removed from the body by the kidneys, BUN levels show hydration status and help to evaluate the kidneys and liver. ●●

### Calcium (Ca)

Elevations can be an early sign of certain cancers. Imbalanced calcium and phosphorus levels are indicative of certain metabolic disease, such as those of the parathyroid gland and kidney disease. ●●

### Cholesterol (CHOL)

Changes may be an indication of a variety of disorders, including liver and thyroid disease. Low values may be a sign that the liver is not working well. ●●●

### Creatinine (CRE)

An important value to monitor kidney function. ●

### Electrolytes (K+,Na+)

Potassium (K+) levels are important for normal muscle function and heart rate. Sodium (Na+) levels are important for body fluid balance. ●●

### Globulin (GLOB)

A body protein that, if elevated, may indicate inflammation or infection.

### Glucose (GLU)

Elevated levels can indicate problems, such as diabetes. Low levels can be associated with liver disease or severe infection. ●●

### Phosphorus (PHOS)

Important to monitor for kidney disease, as well as its balance with calcium to monitor many conditions. ●

### Thyroxine (T4)

An excellent test for thyroid gland function in cats. The thyroid glands play a major role in metabolism. ●

### Total Bilirubin (TBIL)

An important value to evaluate the liver and when there is a low red blood cell count (anemia). ●

### Total Protein (TP)

An estimate of the total protein in the body. Changes can help identify many conditions such as diseases of the liver, kidney, and gastrointestinal tract. ●●●

## Hematology tests

Hematology testing includes the complete blood count (CBC), which is a test that provides measurements of various blood components. The CBC is an important tool that can detect conditions such as anemia and leukemia, and is also used to assess stress levels, inflammation, infection, and blood clotting capabilities. Blood components measured include:

**Red Blood Cells (RBCs)** carry oxygen to the tissues of the body and transport carbon dioxide to be exhaled by the lungs.

**White Blood Cells (WBCs)** play a major role in your cat's immune system function. Normal baseline levels are very important to determine the importance of changes seen with infection or inflammation.

**Platelets** are a crucial component of the blood clotting system. Adequate numbers must be present to prevent or stop bleeding. Therefore, it is very important that platelet numbers are known to identify clotting issues before they become critical in the non-surgical patient, and prior to any surgical procedure.

## Urine tests

Urine testing may also be evaluated alongside chemistry blood testing to evaluate for urinary tract and systemic diseases.

**Urinalysis** completes the total body assessment of your cat when combined with other laboratory testing. A urinalysis helps to assess how well the kidneys can concentrate urine, if there is a protein loss (microalbuminuria or urine protein to creatinine ratio), and/or if there are signs of infection or other abnormalities (crystals, casts, and other sediment) of the urinary system. This test is necessary to determine if kidney dysfunction is present.