**Is your senior friend acting confused?**

Canine Cognitive Dysfunction (CCD)

CCD is a common disease of senior dogs caused by aging changes in the brain resulting in reduced memory and learning. It is similar to Alzheimer's in people, however this disease does not shorten the lifespan of the pet.

I think it's really important to discuss though because it can disrupt the bond between the animal and his/her caregiver due to the behavioral changes making care of your senior friend more challenging. I am all about preserving this bond and promoting quality of life

CCD comes on slowly, so it can often be overlooked, and some of the signs can overlap with other disease processes so be sure to discuss with your veterinarian.

What are the signs to watch for?

* Disorientation: The pet may not understand where they are and can get lost or seem confused with daily routines
* Sleep Wake Cycle Disturbances: often seen as night time pacing. This can be a huge burden for pet parents.
* Housesoiling:
* Anxiety: usually secondary to the confusion.

So what can be done?

* Mental stimulation such as new sounds/smells/toys/and activities are recommended to stimulate existing brain function
* Supplements such as melatonin or valerian root can help with night time pacing
* Herbal therapy can help correct secondary imbalances in the body
* Acupuncture can help support the brain and other organs and also promote harmony
* Omegas are important for brain health
* Antioxidants also support brain function and can help counteract some aging processes.

Note: Most kibbles do not contain appropriate antioxidants since they are not a "required" nutrient and most of these nutrients are lost with high heat processing, despite quality food on the ingredient label

I'd love to help you navigate your pets golden years

Please reach out to me for a detailed, in home consultation if you'd like to discuss a customized plan to manage CCD in your senior companion

All in health,

Dr. Jamie Walkush DVM, CVA, CVFT, CVTP