

Ask Dr Jyl: **The Myth: One Pet Year Equals Seven Human Years**

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Dear Dr. Jyl,

I recently adopted a little dog and I do not know his age. How do I tell his age? At what age is he considered a senior pet? Is it true that one pet year is equivalent to seven human years?

Gabriel
Roseville, CA

Dear Gabriel,

Your veterinarian should be able to estimate your pets' age. Aging plays an important role in your pets' life, especially when it comes to determining the quality of your pets' life and longevity.

When the gradual onset of health problems occurs in an apparently healthy pet they may often go unnoticed with age. Once symptoms appear, the condition may be too difficult or costly to diagnose or treat. There are many conditions, if diagnosed early, they can be completely reversed or controlled for extended periods of time.

A recently published chart by
Antech Laboratories is as follows:

Dog (years)	Human (years)	Cat (years)	Human (years)
1	15	1	15
2	24	2	24
4	32	5	36
7	45	7	45
10	56	12	64
15	76	18	88
20	98	21	98

Now there is an easy way for dog owners to determine their pets' ages in human years. An on-line site called, "DOG AGE" is an innovative tool which based on its studies on scientific data. A free evaluation at www.dogage.com evaluates 40 health and lifestyles for your pet. "Dog Age" calculates whether the dog is older or younger than the average dog. It also provides free health information, weekly tips and health guides to pet owners.

It is important to know age is not a disease. Ask your veterinarian about a complete senior wellness program for your pet to help improve and prolong your pets' quality of life.