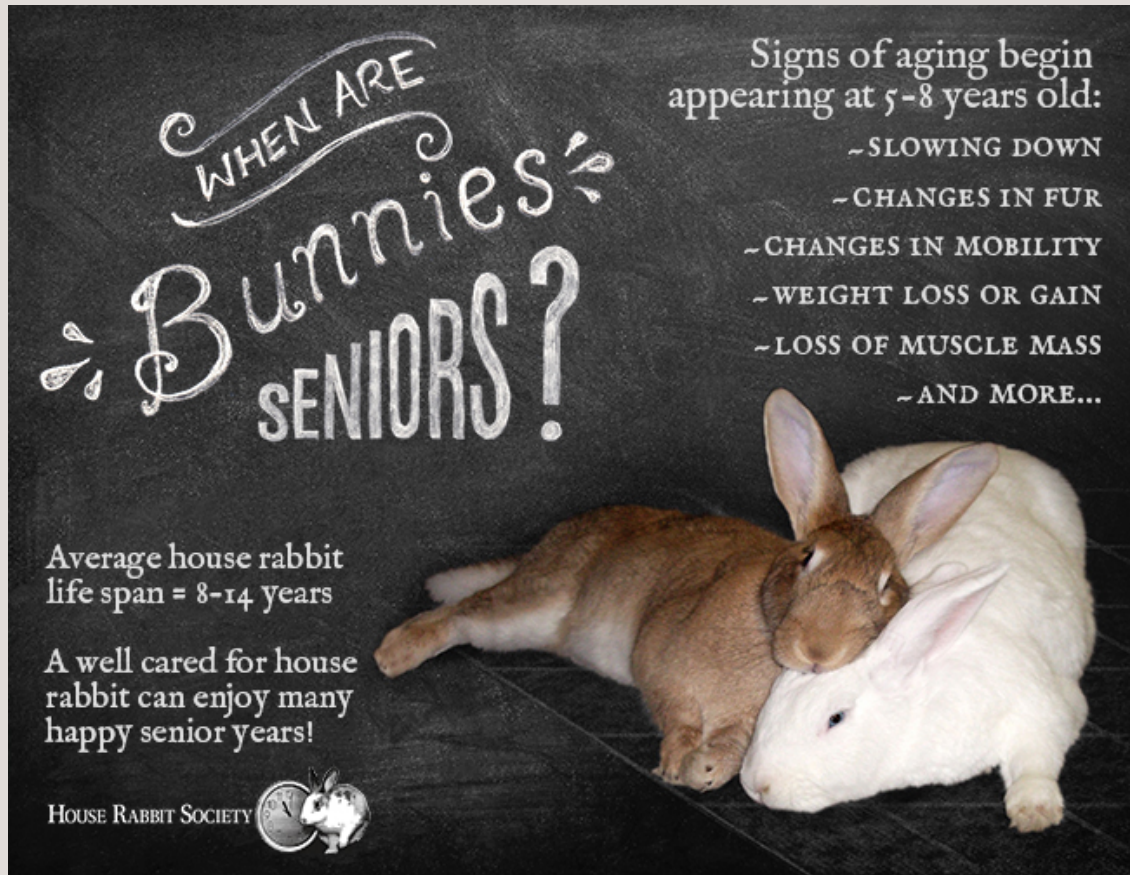


ADULT TO SENIOR BUNNIES

A guide for rabbit caretakers
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What are signs that my bunny is aging?

Behavioral Changes

- Slowing down
- Less active
- Plays with toys less
- Sleeping more or more soundly

Physical Changes

- Changes in fur
- Cataracts/vision loss
- Loss of muscle mass
- Weight gain/loss
- Tooth points

Dietary Changes

- May eat less hay and veggies; prefer others
- Prefer softer pellets
- May prefer softer woods/cardboard

WHEN ARE BUNNIES SENIORS?

- May see signs of aging at 5 - 8 years.
- This varies depending on the breed. For example, larger rabbits such as Flemish Giants may show signs of aging (arthritis) a bit earlier.



HOW CAN I BEST SUPPORT MY AGING BUNNY?

- Start good habits early: brush their fur often and regularly for when s/he cannot groom bunsself. A brush with soft, natural bristles works well for sensitive bunnies.
- Because they are often less active, their nails need to be trimmed more often since they are not naturally filing them down.
- Soften pellets or provide extruded pellets, such as Science Selective 4+ for mature rabbits.
- Provide a variety of hay; third-cut timothy and orchard grass are soft types of hay that may be easier for them to chew.
- At first signs of lack of mobility, start a joint support supplement (consult with veterinarian first).
- Check for any signs of cloudiness in eyes/lack of vision that may limit their movements and consult your veterinarian. In the meantime, limit changing their environment so that they can easily move around.
- Provide soft bedding, such as fleece or cotton towels, to help support them. They often lose fur on the bottom of their feet, so this helps them stay comfortable.
- If they like to climb, provide them with a lower step or bench so that they are not hopping up or down at a steep angle.



Image from Wagon Wheel Farm



MEDICAL ISSUES TO LOOK FOR:

- Eating less food
- Drinking less water
- Less stool output
- Not eating at all
- Pawing at ears/nose
- Favoring one side
- No longer able to jump
- Dragging legs
- Marked weight loss
- Inability to groom
- Longer nails due to less wear on them



TALK TO YOUR VET ABOUT:

- Arthritis medications
- Acupuncture
- Laser therapy
- Pain management
- Fur loss on feet, which, can lead to sore hocks
- Dietary change, which may indicate a tooth issue
- Cataracts/cloudy eyes
- Any significant changes in behavior, diet, or appearance