

## MAKING YOUR HOUSE MORE FRIENDLY TO YOUR DISABLED PET

Making some simple changes in your house can make all the difference to a handicapped or injured pet. Just like people, dogs can get depressed by the inability to do things they used to do. With most conditions requiring physical therapy or rehabilitation finding ways to keep moving, and avoiding long periods spent sitting or lying down, minimizes muscle atrophy, weight gain, depression and pain. It also prevents pressure sores. Exercise, sunshine and fresh air are beneficial to animals as well, so getting a disabled dog outside and moving around more is a great goal.

- Ramps: for stairs, furniture or getting into or out of a vehicle
- Baby gates: to block off stairs or rooms with slippery floors
- Rugs, runners, rubber mats or dog booties: for traction and prevention of slips and falls
- Adjusting the height of food and water bowls: for neck and shoulder injuries or pain, or when balance is poor
- Slings and towels: to support the weight of the pet without injuring the owner's back
- Thick dry bedding or padding: to prevent pressure sores and skin problems
- Proper lighting: for dogs who cannot see well to navigate safely
- Carts, splints, neck braces and casts: to support weight, decrease pain and enable movement
- Pain medication & management: pets who are not painful maintain better mobility and recover more quickly
- Weight management: weight loss/management make a huge difference in mobility, quality of life and pain level for an injured or disabled pet. While your pet is recuperating or is less active he or she will need less food.