



THE BENEFITS OF OWNING A PET

Pets, whether a dog, cat, bird, fish, rabbit, or even a turtle, can **reduce stress, anxiety, and depression, ease loneliness, encourage exercise and playfulness, and even improve your cardiovascular health.**



SOCIAL CONNECTIVITY

Having a dog gets you outside, where you'll naturally find yourself interacting and engaging with your community on a regular basis. For example, pets can function as social icebreakers. This may be especially meaningful to introverts, or people who have difficulty striking up a conversation with new people.



LOWER BLOOD PRESSURE

One study examined pet ownership and cardiovascular reactivity and found that people with pets had lower base heart rates and blood pressure. Pet owners also experienced smaller increases in heart rate and blood pressure during periods of stress. Having an aquarium also lowers anxiety and stress, which is why you often see them in doctors' offices.



MENTAL HEALTH

Dog ownership has been found to be beneficial for veterans living with post-traumatic stress disorder, and pet ownership is more generally linked with improved emotional stability. Owning a pet is also associated with an increased sense of meaning and purpose.

REFERENCE: <https://tinyurl.com/32kuk5t3>



ALLERGY PREVENTION

A seven-year study of almost 500 children found that children who were exposed to dogs and cats as babies were half as likely to have allergies and risk factors for asthma as they grew up than those who had no pets.

REFERENCE: <https://tinyurl.com/a75n9fez>



FEEL GOOD HORMONES

Have you ever stopped to think about why you stroke your pet, scratch your dog's ears, or pet your cat's furry belly? A study found that petting pets was linked with higher levels of feel-good hormone oxytocin and lower levels of stress hormone cortisol.



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Many owners who would otherwise do little or no physical activity, despite the recommendations of their physicians, end up getting quite a bit of exercise simply by caring for, playing with, and walking their dogs.

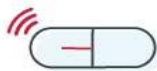
BLOG ARTICLE:

<https://pottstownfoundation.org/healthy-living/live-longer-with-a-dog>

LOCAL SHELTERS:

www.ddpets.com • <http://recycledtails.org> • www.mostlymuttz.org • www.sibes.com • www.tlcrecuepa.com

Steps to responsible pet ownership



Microchip your pet

- Permanent solution to pet identification compared to collar tags that break or get lost
- Microchipping process is quick and causes minimal discomfort to pets
- Number is unique to your pet – can connect to a lost pet recovery service
- Recommended for both cats and dogs



Pet Proofing

- Protect against potential hazards (loose cables/cords, hazardous chemicals, toxic plants, food, etc.)
- Install dog gates to block them from going into unwanted areas (up or down stairs, certain room, etc)
- Keep clutter at bay – small toys, shoes, precious items – puppies like to chew!



Training

- Creates a stronger bond between humans and dogs
- Provides mental stimulation and enrichment for your dog
- Helps reduce unwanted destructive behaviors
- Builds your dog's confidence, which also creates safety and freedom for you dog



Spay and Neutering

- Can prevent pet homelessness
- Tend to live longer as they have extra protection from certain diseases
- Less likely to develop behavioural problems



Veterinary care

- Flea protection, parasite prevention, exams & vaccines, deworming meds, fecal exams



Pet Insurance

- Prepare for an unexpected trip to the vet (illness, or emergency)
- In the event of an accident or illness it's good to have pet insurance in your back pocket. Coverage can make it easier to say yes to the care your vet recommends