

BONDING WITH A PET PROMOTES HEALTHY AGING, THEY GIVE US A **SENSE OF PURPOSE** AND ROUTINE, BRINGING JOY TO OUR LIVES

Pets are more than our companions. Science demonstrates that the health benefits of the **human-animal bond can have a positive impact on every stage in life.** Pet ownership can help keep us healthy and improve our quality of life as we age.



Taking care of a pet can reduce loneliness and increase our feelings of self-worth. For many, pets provide a sense of meaning and order to our day and make us more likely to stick to a routine.¹

Part of this routine directly impacts our physical health: exercise. Pets can encourage regular exercise, either through walks or play, which is good for our cardiovascular health.



People who own pets have been found to be at a lower risk for cardiovascular disease than those who do not, possibly because they have lower levels of stress and are more likely to get their daily physical activity.²

Pets can also provide us emotional support. Research shows they can buffer our response to stress as we age and help us cope with extreme stress.³ Self-report data has reliably shown that pet owners rate their



social support system and quality of life higher than non-pet owners.^{4,5}

The human-animal bond has been studied for decades, and the research is clear: **the more you take care of your pet's health, the more your pet takes care of you.** Ask your vet about the human-animal bond at your next visit!

MAKE AN APPOINTMENT AND LEARN MORE ABOUT THE HUMAN-ANIMAL BOND

References:

1. Baun, M., Johnson, R., and McCabe, B. "Handbook on Animal-Assisted Therapy: Theoretical Foundations and Guidelines for Practice." *Fine, AH Ed.* (2006). 2. Levine, G.N. et al. "Pet Ownership and Cardiovascular Risk: A Scientific Statement from the American Heart Association." *Circulation* 127.23 (2013): 2353-2363. 3. Cherniack, E.P., and Cherniack, A.R. "The Benefit of Pets and Animal-Assisted Therapy to the Health of Older Individuals." *Current gerontology and geriatrics research* 2014 (2014). DOI: 10.1186/s12888-018-1613-2. 4. Garrity, T.F. et al. "Pet Ownership and Attachment as Supportive Factors in the Health of the Elderly." *Anthrozoos* 3.1 (1989): 35-44. DOI: 10.2752/089279390787057829. 5. Bao, K. J. and Schreer, G. "Pets and Happiness: Examining the Association Between Pet Ownership and Wellbeing." *Anthrozoos* 29.2 (2016): 283-296.

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