

Positive Facts about owning a pet

✓ **Pets can improve your mood**

For those who love animals, it's virtually impossible to stay in a bad mood when a pair of loving puppy eyes meets yours, or when a super-soft cat rubs up against your hand. Research supports the mood-enhancing benefits of pets.

✓ **Pets can make you healthier -Studies indicate pets can control blood pressure better than drugs**

Yes, it's true. While ACE inhibiting drugs can generally reduce blood pressure, they aren't as effective on controlling spikes in blood pressure due to stress and tension. However, in a recent study, groups of hypertensive New York stockbrokers who got dogs or cats were found to have lower blood pressure and heart rates than those who didn't get pets. When they heard of the results, most of those in the non-pet group went out and got pets!

✓ **Pets encourage you to get out and get exercise**

Whether we walk our dogs because they need it, or are more likely to enjoy a walk when we have companionship, dog owners do spend more time walking than non-pet owners, at least if we live in an urban setting. Because exercise is good for stress management and overall health, owning a dog can be credited with increasing these benefits.

✓ **Pets can help with social support**

When we're out walking, having a dog with us can make us more approachable and give people a reason to stop and talk, thereby increasing the number of people we meet, giving us an opportunity to increase our network of friends and acquaintances, which also has great stress management benefits.

✓ **Pets stave off loneliness and provide unconditional support**

Pets can be there for you in ways that people can't. They can offer love and companionship, and can also enjoy comfortable silences, keep secrets and are excellent snugglers. And they could be the best antidote to loneliness. In fact, research shows that nursing home residents reported less loneliness when visited by dogs than when they spent time with other people! All these benefits can reduce the amount of stress people experience in response to feelings of social isolation and lack of social support from people.

✓ **Pets can reduce stress—sometimes more than people**

While we all know the power of talking about your problems with a good friend who's also a good listener, recent research shows that spending time with a pet may be even better! Recent research shows that, when conducting a task that's stressful, people actually experienced less stress when their pets were with them than when a supportive friend or even their spouse was present! This may be partially due to the fact that pets don't judge us; they just love us.

✓ **Pets make excellent snuggle buddies**

✓ **Pets can be entertaining**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BVBEE7WFsNA>

{...no problem getting ideas here! This is fun! }