Pets for Health

For many of us, pets are as much a part of the family as any human member. Pets bring joy and love us unconditionally, which can have a positive effect on our moods and health. Pets can calm us, decrease stress, help us make social connections and bring feelings of happiness.

Being a pet owner (or owned by a pet) can give you:

- **A Healthier Heart**—Some pets require walking, which results in higher levels of physical activity and lower blood pressure for their humans.
- **A Soother**—Petting your cat or dog releases a relaxation hormone that lowers stress hormones. And it is good for your pet, too!
- **A Social Magnet**—Pets help you meet new people and make it easy to start a conversation.
- **A Mood Improver**—People with pets are generally happier, more trusting and less lonely. Pets give people a sense of belonging and meaning.
- **An Immune System Boost**—Studies show that babies with dogs or cats at home may have fewer colds and ear infections during their first year.

As your pets improve your well-being, be sure to care for theirs with regular vet visits and tick and heartworm prevention.

Sources: [webmd.com](http://webmd.com) and [avma.org](http://avma.org)
Provided by Wespath Benefits and Investments

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