



Fascinating Facts About Humans And Animals

(NAPSA)—If yours is like most households in the United States, you have at least one pet.

That's a good thing, considering that people who understand health care have discovered something interesting about animals—they can help improve your health.

How Pets Help Your Health

According to Dr. Heather Douglas, DVM, St. George's University/School of Veterinary Medicine, '06, pets can be good for you in four ways. They can decrease your:

- Blood pressure
- Cholesterol levels
- Triglyceride levels
- Feelings of loneliness.

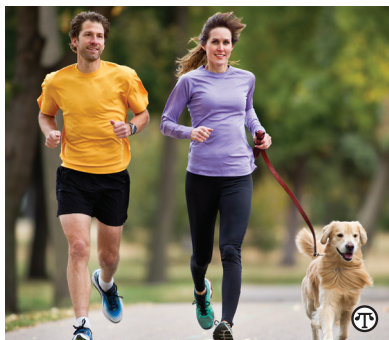
The CDC goes on to say that pets can increase your:

- Opportunities for exercise and outdoor activities
- Opportunities for socialization.

Adds Dr. Douglas, it's a good idea to include your dog in your exercise regimen. Whether it's running, walking or even yoga (which dogs seem to enjoy), start slowly and gradually build up tolerance to avoid injury to either of you. One day a week of yoga practice can improve your flexibility, strength, balance and focus.

"Based on a study by Glenn N. Levine and others published in the *Circulation* journal of the American Heart Association," she says, "there is an association between pet ownership (primarily cat or dog) and lower blood pressure. It was also found that dog owners, who are more likely to exercise with their pet, may have a reduced risk of obesity. Dog ownership is also associated with decreased cardiovascular risk and may have some role in reducing cardiovascular disease.

"The human-animal bond is an amazing phenomenon that offers health benefits to both the person and pet. Incorporating man's best friend into a workout regime can add fun to exercise, while improving the health of both the human and animal involved."



Having pets is good for your health, doctors say.

Furthermore, according to a study by the Stroke Institute of Minnesota, owning a cat can dramatically reduce your chances of dying from heart disease by 30 percent. The researchers suspect a dog study would provide similar results.

A Smart Place To Study These Ideas

One place where the study of the interaction between humans and animals is at the forefront is St. George's University, a fully accredited center of international medical and veterinary education on the island of Grenada in the Caribbean. There, faculty from 140 countries and students from around the world are looking into how learning about the health of humans and animals can be related.

At St. George's, the Schools of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, the Department of Public Health and Preventive Medicine and the Windward Islands Research and Education Foundation provide a collaboration of expertise to support the concept of "One Health, One Medicine" and to take students from residency to fellowship training to employment. It's all part of the university's global approach to medicine.

Learn More

If you are interested in a career in medicine, veterinary medicine or public health, visit www.sgu.edu/future-students.