



DECREASED STRESS

Pets buffer response to stress

A study of 120 married couples demonstrated that, in the presence of a pet, people experienced less stress in response to a stressful event (in this case, a math test). Furthermore, people with pets recovered faster from the stress they did experience, compared to non-pet-ownersⁱ.

LOWER BLOOD PRESSURE & CHOLESTEROL

Living with pets can keep blood pressure low

In one study of older adults with pre- to mild hypertension, dog ownership was associated with lower systolic and diastolic blood pressureⁱⁱ.

Pets help keep cholesterol levels low

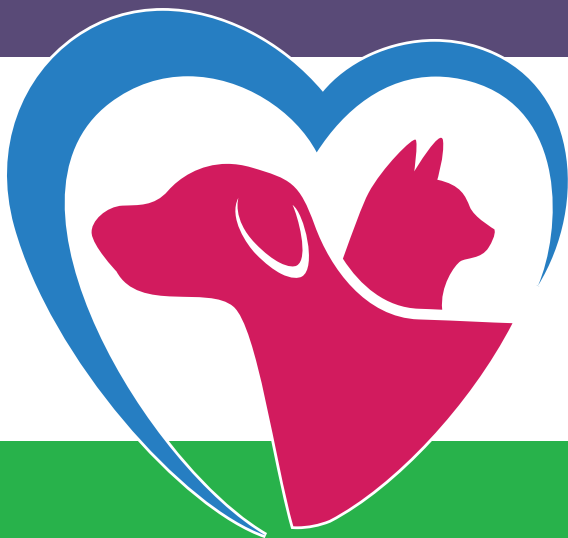
A study of patients with coronary artery disease (CAD), sometimes referred to as high cholesterol, found pet ownership to be protective against CAD. Dog owners were found to have a significantly lower risk for CAD. As duration of pet ownership increased, there was a decreased tendency of CAD riskⁱⁱⁱ.



INCREASED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Dog ownership promotes walking

One survey of pet owners found, compared with people who did not walk their dog, dog walkers reported higher levels of physical activity and lower body mass index, in addition to lower odds of self-reported diabetes, hypertension, and high cholesterol^{iv}.



HEART HEALTH MONTH: The Top Benefits Of Pet Ownership For Healthy Hearts

IMPROVED RECOVERY

Pets increase chance of survival following heart attack

One year following a heart attack, 28% of pet-nonowners had died compared to only 6% of pet owners in a sample of 92 patients^v.



INCREASED LONGEVITY

Dog ownership and survival

Pooling the data of over 3.8 million participants, a systematic review of studies found dog ownership was associated with a 24% risk reduction for all-cause mortality as compared to non-ownership. In analyses of studies evaluating cardiovascular mortality, dog ownership conferred a 31% risk reduction for cardiovascular death^{vi}.

Cat ownership and survival

A decreased risk for death due to heart attack and all cardiovascular diseases (including stroke) has been observed among persons with current or past cat ownership^{vii}.



For more information about the benefits of pets for heart health and about the human-animal bond, please visit www.habri.org.