

The Benefits of Pet Ownership

Did you know that there are many benefits to pet ownership? Owning an animal can increase your physical activity, help with feelings of loneliness or lack of socialization, and improve behavior and empathy when pets are around children. You may think the process of owning a pet is expensive; however, shelters such as the [Linda McNatt Animal Care and Adoption Center](#) located in Denton, Texas charge just \$60 to adopt a dog or cat. This adoption fee includes needed vaccinations and a microchip, which you may not get buying from a breeder. [Shopping for a pet](#) or purchasing an animal from a breeder can cost a few thousand dollars.

Getting Active!

Owning an animal can play a big part in increasing physical activity and simply reminding you to get some fresh air each day. Owning a dog comes with the responsibility of ensuring they are taken on frequent walks, getting outdoor time to use the restroom and playing with them, especially when they get the zoomies! Taking your dog for walks not only makes them happy, but gives you an opportunity to get in daily steps that can improve your heart health by getting your blood pumping. If you work an office job that can require you to sit at a desk for long hours a day, a dog can be the best excuse to take care of your body through physical activity.

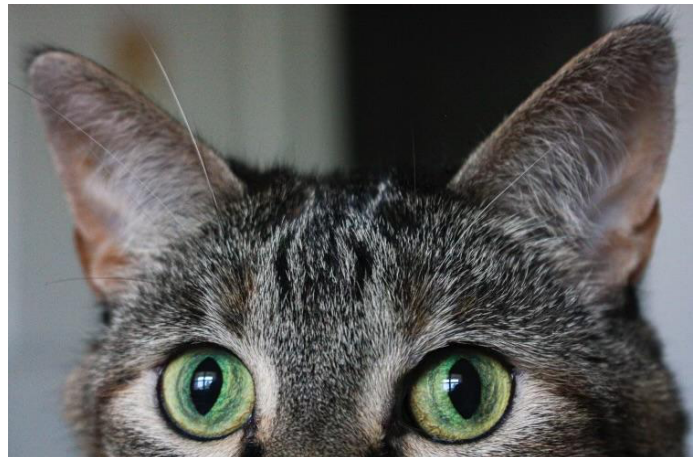
Research shows that dog owners spend about [300 minutes](#) a week walking; this is about 200 more minutes than people who do not own a dog. Making sure to walk each day for about 30 minutes can lower your risk of life-harming conditions such as:

- Heart disease
- Type 2 diabetes
- Osteoporosis
- Some cancers
- Strokes

Loneliness and Socialization

In addition to getting you outside and active, animals can help you with feelings of loneliness and help you get socializing. Many dog owners choose to take their dogs to dog parks so they can have a large field to run and play in while getting to meet other dogs and smell new things. This creates a window for dog owners to socialize with each other and maybe turn your new relationship into a future playdate for your dog.

Even though cats may not want to visit a park, they are also a great way to help with loneliness. Having a companion that finds comfort by your side can be enough to help a person feel less alone. Cat owner Baylee Harris who adopted her cat named Bart last year and asked her if she feels he has helped improve her life in college.



A close-up photo of a cat's green eyes. Picture Credit: Karla Castaneda

“I definitely feel less lonely,” Harris said. “Coming home to Bart and talking to him knowing he won’t judge me has been a lifesaver in college.”

Overall, pets can be a benefit to your lifestyle by helping you get more physical activity, helping you socialize and improving feelings of loneliness. Pets help fill the human need for interaction and companionship. By being loyal and consistent parts of your life, a pet may help your mental state.

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