

# Do pets make us healthier?

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## Featured topic and speakers

The short answer is yes! Your pet isn't just cute—they might be keeping your heart healthy, too! Veterinarian Courtney A. Campbell, DVM, DACVS-SA, explains why owning a pet can support your cardiovascular health and improve your overall well-being.

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## Speakers

- **Courtney Campbell, DVM, DACVS-SA**, veterinary surgeon

## Transcript

**Dr. Campbell:** What if I told you that the prescription for your cardiovascular health might be asleep on your couch right now.

According to a 2019 Meta analysis, dog ownership reduced the cause of all death by 24%. And now, if you looked at cardiovascular disease specifically, it reduced it by 31%. There's a lot of conversation right now about longevity—getting better sleep, a better diet—pet ownership should be in that same conversation.

The association between pet ownership and longevity is real. Dopamine, prolactin, beta, endorphins—all of those stress hormone responses have a true biological effect. Dog

owners essentially get more exercise and more walks than non-dog owners up to 22 minutes a day to meet that standard and is recommended by the American Heart Association.

That benefit is actually mutual. It's a bidirectional relationship. So, when you are improving your cardiovascular health, you're also improving your pet's cardiovascular health.

"You did such a great job with him. He looks so good."

As a veterinary surgeon when I'm evaluating pets and I'm getting them back to full mobility, what I'm thinking about is not only restoring that, but I'm also working for the family as well. That is the medicine.

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