

Your pet depends tremendously on you and your veterinarian for a healthy, happy life. While your veterinarian is a skilled professional who can recommend a health program for your pet, you can help secure a satisfying life for your pet by providing the four C's of pet care:



Commitment—having a pet is a lifelong responsibility, but it's one that includes many rewards.

Care—providing total health care from the earliest stages to the later years of a pet's life is an owner's unspoken promise.

Contact—just like you, companion pets desire and thrive on lots of attention and praise.

Compassion—because you are your pets' caretaker and friend, they enjoy all of the love you can muster.

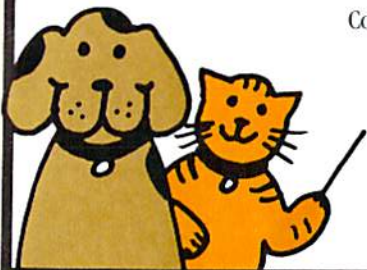
If you're considering getting a pet, or even if you've had one or several for many years, you might be interested in the checklist contained inside. While these tips are solid pointers when caring for dogs and cats, please ask your veterinarian what should be tailored to your particular pet's needs.

For more information about pet care, write to "Caring for Pets," Ralston Purina Company, P.O. Box 88999, St. Louis, MO 63188.



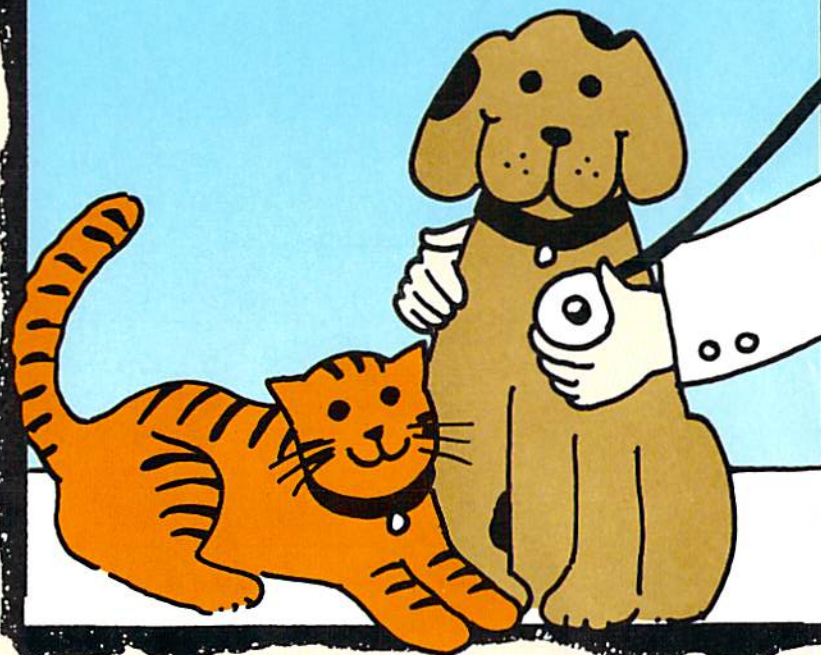
Veterinarians can address a variety of pet-related topics, such as pet selection, health, nutrition, obedience training, and family interaction. The space below is provided for any information you or your veterinarian may want to note.

Courtesy of:



❖ A RALSTON PURINA PROGRAM ❖

The Pet Owner's Checklist





The Pet Owner's Checklist: Ten Terrific Tips

1. Develop a partnership with a veterinarian and practice staff, including discussing details with your veterinarian before you obtain a new pet.



2. Select a pet wisely—based on your lifestyle, schedule and budget, as well as the animal's expected physical and behavioral characteristics and grooming needs.



3. Ask your veterinarian about developing a complete plan for your pet's total life care, including regular physical examinations, proper vaccinations, appropriate housing for varying seasons, parasite control, nutritional needs, reproductive options and additional information that will help you better understand your pet.



4. Supply your pet with the appropriate type of food, considering such factors as brands from reliable companies, your pet's age, nutritional requirements, and special health considerations. (And remember, table scraps put unnecessary weight on a pet and can make them sick.)



5. Provide your pet with fresh water at all times, cleaning and changing the bowl daily.

6. Depending on your pet's age and physical condition, most pets should have at least 15 to 20 minutes of daily exercise.



7. Spend time with your pet every day to encourage the human/animal bond and to ensure that your pet learns solid "social skills."

8. Training pets should start at early stages with basic house training and discipline, and can move to obedience. Be sure to include some play time to balance and aid in the training regimen, though!



9. Ask your veterinarian about early signs of pet illness. If noticed, call your veterinarian promptly. And when your veterinarian prescribes a medication, be sure to follow those instructions carefully and completely.



10. Work with your veterinarian to establish your pet's preventive health program. Your pet can suffer from ailments also common to people, such as cancer, heart, kidney and eye problems. Through proper life care, (including geriatric care), your pet can enjoy a longer and happier life.



Consulting with your veterinarian promptly can be one of the most valuable precautions taken for your pet's health. Spend time with your pet and know its typical behavior and overall appearance. Do not hesitate to call or see your veterinarian if you notice any of the following "danger signals" in your dog or cat.

Emergency Situations—

If your veterinarian is not immediately available, contact the emergency clinic recommended by your veterinarian.



- Burns
- Choking or difficulty in breathing
- Cuts, bites or insect stings
- Poisoning (identify the poison, if possible)
- Heat stroke
- Bleeding
- Vomiting blood
- Electrical shock
- Frostbite
- Blood in the urine or stool
- Seizures
- Losing consciousness
- Swallowing foreign objects
- Physical injury (car accidents, animal fights, gun wounds, fractures)

Signs of Potentially

Serious Illness—Contact your veterinarian as soon as possible, because some of the following symptoms may signal serious or life-threatening conditions.

- Discharge or odor from eyes, nose or ears
- Loss of teeth or bad breath
- Pale or bleeding gums
- Loss of appetite
- Diarrhea
- Sudden change in bowel or litter habits
- Sudden weight gain or loss
- Coughing or sneezing
- Frequent urination
- Excessive thirst
- Excessive scratching, licking or loss of hair
- Lumps or growths on or under skin
- Limping, lameness, reluctance to move
- Signs of pain or discomfort

Important: These lists are not all-inclusive. For your pet's health, be sure to discuss any irregular details with your veterinarian.

