

Having a Dog Can Benefit Seniors

There are so many ways in which dogs enrich our lives emotionally and physically. Here are some examples of how pets can be of particular benefit to seniors.

Did you know that seniors who have dogs or other animal companions pay fewer visits to the doctor?

- Seniors who have dogs or cats and who require hospitalization tend to stay in the hospital for a shorter duration than those without companion animals.
- Seniors who have pet tend to have a more active social life than those who don't.
- Seniors who have pets tend to be more physically active and get more exercise than those without them.
- Seniors who have pets experience less depression, loneliness and anxiety than those without them.
- Pets provide seniors with unconditional love, loyalty and devotion.
- Pets fulfill the care giving and nurturing needs of seniors.
- Pets provide seniors with companionship and friendship.
- Pets improve the overall quality and help increase the longevity of seniors.

There are many other gifts our animal companions bring to seniors – comfort, acceptance, nonjudgmentalism, spontaneity, affection and laughter. Many seniors who have outlived their spouses or human friends can derive much joy from the daily presence in their lives of a dog or other animal companion.