

The Top Ten Ways To Extend Your Pet's Life

All those who have grieved and mourned the loss of a beloved animal companion wish that our dearest and most devoted friends could have lived longer. It is a fact that generally we, as human beings, outlive our pets, and so, we must learn to become accustomed to coping with and recovering from grief over their loss. We can never take time or any life for granted. However, there are various ways that we can increase the likelihood of our pets living long, happy and healthy lives. Here are my top ten tips to help you extend your pet's life.

- 1). Have your pet examined at least once a year (if not more) by a veterinarian. A wellness exam is an important component in keeping your pet healthy and discovering any potentially dangerous health issues your pet may have.
- 2) Have your pet spayed or neutered. Neutering eliminates the possibility of testicular cancer and decreases the chance of developing prostate disease. Spaying your female pet decreases her chances of developing ovarian or uterine cancer. Spay/neuter also diminish your pet's desire to run away or roam. Pet overpopulation is a huge problem not only in this country but also throughout the world. Too many unwanted animals are born and, thus far too many innocent animals suffer and are euthanised every year.
- 3). Make sure your pet receives his annual vaccinations including: Rabies, DHPP, Bordatella, Lepto as well as heartworm and fecal tests. These are critically important preventive and lifesaving measures for your pet.
- 4). Keep your pet clean. Good hygiene including dental hygiene is imperative for his good health. A lack of oral hygiene can result in oral disease, gingivitis and periodontal disease which can be linked to heart, lung and kidney disease.
- 5). Keep your pet on monthly heartworm preventive as well as a regular flea and tick prevention program.
- 6). Feed your pet age appropriate nutritious food regularly. Consult your vet as to the food best suited for your pet's overall health and well-being. Do not overfeed or underfeed your pet.
- 7). Make sure that your pet always has fresh, clean water.
- 8). Exercise your pet regularly.
- 9). Interact with your pet frequently and as often as possible. They love to please us and

require attention and affection. Don't let your pet be a "latchkey" pet – alone, bored and frustrated.

10. Love, respect and appreciate your pet. These are really the most fundamental requirements of pet parenthood. Do so, and he will repay you a million fold with his love, loyalty and devotion.