

Dogs, Seniors Are a Healthy Combination

Seniors say dog ownership contributes to sharp minds and active lifestyles.

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Seniors 60 years old and older say their pets help keep their minds active, memories sharp, and contribute to their overall happiness, according to a recent survey by Purina Pet Care.

“Research showing the physical benefits of pet ownership for seniors, which include lower systolic blood pressure and cholesterol levels, has been well-documented over the years,” says Steve Cohn, DVM, a Purina Pets for Seniors veterinarian. “However, seniors also benefit emotionally from pet ownership, which might not be as easily seen on the outside, but can greatly impact their quality of life and enable them to feel their best.”

The survey showed that 88 percent of senior respondents say constant companionship is the best part of owning a cat or dog, and 69 percent say their pets make them look forward to each day.

The results also revealed pet ownership may contribute to a more mobile lifestyle; 45 percent say they became more active after adopting a pet and 26 percent of the female respondents said they lost weight.

On Sunday, Sept. 16, special PetLover coupons that benefit seniors who adopt pets will be included in newspapers nationwide. For each coupon redeemed by Nov. 30, 2007, Purina will donate 3 cents to Tony La Russa’s Senior Adoption Program. The program provides adoption fee discounts for eligible seniors. Purina will donate a minimum of \$60,000 to the organization.

During the month of October, Purina will host adoption events throughout the country where qualifying seniors will have to opportunity to take advantage of the senior adoption program. For a list of locations, [click here](#).