

## Dogs Receive Vet Care More Than Cats

**The AVMA reports that owners take their cats to the vets less often, and are less attached to their cats than their dogs.**

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Cats and dogs don't get the same level of affection or medical attention – and it's a trend that's leaving cats shortchanged, according to a new study by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA).

The study found that pet owners tend to have a stronger bond with their dogs, are more attentive to their needs, and are typically more attached to their dogs than their cats. The differences translated to medical care as well.

Pet owners take their dogs to the veterinarian for vaccinations and routine physical exams more often than they take their cats, the study showed. The statistics were consistent even in households with both dogs and cats, with a third of cats in those households foregoing an annual veterinary exam, compared with 13 percent of dogs in the same household.

Several factors contribute to the discrepancy, the study revealed. Pet owners typically spend about 45 hours a week with their dogs, compared to about 32 hours a week with their cats – and the more time spent with a pet, the stronger the pet-owner bond, according to the study.

In addition, dogs are considered “more affectionate” than cats and therefore “more fun” to be around, the study showed. Many owners also expressed that dogs need routine examinations because they are outside more often than cats. Cat owners stated that cats “do not get sick and ... can take care of themselves.”

The AVMA states that these are misconceptions and the results are worrisome – cats are substantially underserved medically, which can lead to problems not only in an animal's health but in public health as well.

The study appeared in the Feb. 15 edition of the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association.