



®

AMSCOPE

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Take the 'Ultimate' Antiaging Pill - Did You Know Your Pet Was This Incredible?

Written by Dr. Karen Shaw Becker

Everyone who loves and lives with dogs knows how much they add to our lives, and scientific studies are now confirming what we already knew or at least suspected about the benefits of canine companionship. Among recent research findings are that dogs may help us live longer, relieve feelings of stress, encourage us to be more physically active and add structure to our day.

They may also help us save on health care costs, relieve severe depression in adults, lessen anxiety in kids, build a sense of community and teach children priceless lessons about life.

10 Evidence-Based Benefits of Canine Companionship

1. Your dog may help you live longer — This is especially true if you're single or a senior. Your dog may help reduce your cardiovascular risk by providing both social support and increased physical activity. The results of a recent study showed that single dog parents had a 33% lower risk of premature death and a 36% lower risk of heart disease than people without a dog. Another way **dogs may boost heart health and longevity** is via beneficial effects on blood pressure and triglyceride levels.

2. Hanging with your dog can leave you feeling relaxed and content — Spending time with your dog may help you

feel calmer and happier, benefits associated with the release of the "love hormone" oxytocin. When you and your furry companion gaze at one another, your levels of oxytocin increase. This may explain why regular visits with **therapy dogs** have been shown to improve mental health and well-being.

3. If you're a parent, your dog may lower your child's risk of eczema and asthma — A growing body of research suggests **dogs in the home decrease the risk of allergic disease in children**. In one study, exposure to a dog during pregnancy was associated with a lower risk of eczema in babies by age 2.

Early exposure to the diverse bacteria and other microbes from dogs may benefit infants by helping to prime their immune system to function optimally. Exposure to pets while in the womb or up to 3 months of age is even linked to higher levels of certain gut microbes linked to a **reduced risk of allergies** and obesity.

4. Senior dog parents walk more and sit less — A recent U.K. study compared two groups of older adults aged 65 to 81. One group owned dogs; the other group did not. The two groups were evaluated on their time spent walking as measured by individual activity trackers.

The dog-owning group walked an average of 22 minutes more per day — enough to meet both U.S. and international exercise recommendations for substantial health benefits. The researchers also found that dog owners had fewer continuous periods of sitting down than non-dog owners.

5. Retirees receive substantial emotional benefits from dog ownership — For people entering retirement, a dog provides companionship and alleviates loneliness. In addition, your dog becomes a focal point for your attention and requires you to provide a certain amount of structure to each day.

Dogs are also something to touch, which can be especially beneficial for retirees who live alone. People derive comfort from the presence of a dog on their lap or lying next to them. Dogs also need to be cared for, and the act of nurturing a pet enhances emotional and physical relaxation.

Dogs are, of course, fun and funny, which can bring much-needed joy and laughter to the lives of seniors. In addition, studies show dog walkers are more likely to interact socially with other people when they're out and about with their pet.

6. Your canine companion may save you money on health care — A 2015 study conducted on behalf of the Human Animal Bond Research Institute (HABRI) Foundation found that Americans save \$11.7 billion annually in health care costs due to pet ownership. HABRI Executive Director, Steven Feldman, even said, "Thinking about things that people should do to maintain their health, 'get a pet' belongs on that list."

The cost savings was primarily due to a lower incidence of doctor visits. Pet owners — 132.8 million in all — visited a doctor 0.6 times less than non-pet owners. About 20 million dog owners also walked their pet five or more times a week, which lowered the incidence of obesity in this group, leading to another \$419 million in health care savings.

7. Adopting a dog can have a dramatic effect on adults with major depressive disorder — A 2018 study concluded that **adopting a pet** can result in lower rates of recurrence in people suffering from severe depression. The benefits are so significant that even patients resistant to antidepressant medications or psychotherapy report improvement in their mental health.

Researchers assessed the effects on 33 patients who accepted the challenge to adopt a pet (primarily dogs) among 80 who were asked. Another 33 of that number, who neither adopted a pet nor had one already, served as the control group. The patients who adopted a pet improved to the point where their symptoms were considered mild.

8. Kids with dogs may be less anxious — A 2015 study involving cont'd on p. 2...**Antiaging**

The deadline for the January issue is December 8

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LOOK

Please let me know if you make a change

* **DECALS & PINS.** You can get **AMSC decals (\$1.00)** and **replacement pins (\$7.50)** from

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Please write down or save the User Name and Password as there is quite a bit of pertinent information in our Members Section.

UPCOMING SPECIALTIES

Roving – Grays Lake, IL
June 19, 2021

Regular Classes: John P Wade
Sweeps: Linda Drost

Montgomery County
October 10, 2021

Regular Classes: Bruce Schwartz
Sweeps: Tatiana Meyers

Roving – Northern Calif Terrier Assn
April 16, 2022

Regular Classes: Marcia Feld
Sweeps: Amy Gordon

Montgomery County
October 9, 2022

Regular Classes: Bergit Coady-Kabel
Sweeps: Cheryl Coffman

Antiaging...from p. 1

643 children with a mean age of 6.7 years concluded that compared to children without dogs, a lower percentage of children with dogs met the clinical cut-off value of Screen for Child Anxiety and Related Disorders (SCARED-5, a test used to screen for childhood anxiety disorders).

Specifically, only 12% of children with dogs suffered from probable anxiety compared to 21% of those without. The study found that dog ownership was associated with a 9% reduction in the probability of a SCARED-5 score of three or higher, which is the point at which further assessment is recommended to diagnose anxiety.

9. Being a dog parent increases your "social capital" — The results of a recent survey of 2,700 people in three major U.S. cities and Perth, Australia found that pet ownership is significantly associated with higher levels of social capital, defined as the relationships among people who live and work together that allow society to function effectively and realize productive benefits.

Dog owners who walked their dogs experienced the highest average social capital levels, being five times more likely to get to know others in their neighborhood than people with other types of pets.

10. Caring for a dog can teach children vital life lessons — Kids have much to offer their dogs, not the least of which is a built-in playtime and cuddle companion. But the rewards work both ways. Your child can learn much from owning a pet, including these valuable life lessons:

- **Responsibility** — Pets require daily feeding, exercise and affection, not to mention grooming and potty time (and clean-up). Older children can learn how to care for another living creature and even younger children can help with feeding and playtime.
- **Compassion** — Caring for a pet requires compassion, understanding and empathy. Kids learn to be kind and to take care of others' basic needs.

- **Self-Esteem** — Pets show unconditional love, which can be a great boost to a child's self-esteem. So, too, can the satisfaction that comes from having responsibility and caring for a pet's needs.

- **Patience** — Bonding with a new pet often takes time. Your child will learn patience while your new pet becomes comfortable in your home and also during training.



Is your dog bored?

Crazy things can happen when our pets are under-stimulated, like becoming destructive, chewing up furniture or clothes to get our attention. This got us wondering — **What can I do if my dog is bored?** We asked our [Pet Wellness Coach Brian Holmon-Wilson](#) for advice.

What are some signs of doggy boredom?

Dogs are intelligent animals and need a lot of mental stimulation. If they are lacking that, they can get bored very easily. Dogs can do the craziest things when they are bored - like chewing up your socks or clothes to destroying the whole couch.

They love to play with things that smell like you when you're not around. To keep them out of trouble, try braiding a tug toy using one of your old t-shirts so your dog can play with something that smells like you when you're gone.

What can I do to prevent my dog from being bored?

Start by giving your dog a lot of exercise! Take them on a run with you or give them another walk throughout the day. If they are still not the slightest bit pooped out, add a round of fetch.

And when life gets busy, **schedule a dog walker or take your dog to doggy daycare** where they can have plenty of fun playing and tiring themselves out. You can also try changing up your walk routine by taking a different route. When you are walking a different way, your dog will have a lot of new smells to sniff and that will tire them out more easily. If possible, visit a new neighborhood so **Bored?...cont'd on p.3**

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you can both explore together.

Practice simple obedience training with your dog. Even if they know all of their commands, you can always reinforce them and make them even sharper (refer to last week's newsletter?). Agility training is also great for dogs that have a lot of energy. Keep your dog busy and active by slowly progressing into more complicated tricks. Also, herding dogs love herding groups—look for local classes in your area.

What about specifically stimulating their nose?

Yes, that is also a very great idea! **You can have your dog do some nose games** by hiding treats around your house. Dogs love anything to do with smell and they'll love sniffing for treats in unexpected places. I also love to stuff some treats at the bottom of toy baskets so the dog has to take the toys out in order to get to the treat.

And you can try using interactive toys.

My favorites require dogs to get treats by rolling the toy throughout the house. Easily make your own with an empty plastic bottle: cut some tiny holes in it and put some treats inside for your dog to get out. Keep in mind that it might get messy, so you might want to do it outside.

What if my dog is not that mobile anymore?

[Kong toys](#)

are amazing for older dogs. Try one of the rubber toys that you can stuff some yummy fillings in, like peanut butter or yogurt, and put them in the freezer. This frozen treat will keep your dog entertained for quite a while.

Lastly, always keep in mind how much you feed your dog throughout the day so you don't wind up overfeeding them with any of these extra treats. **What are some things you've done to keep your pup entertained, stimulated, and happy?**

The 5 Personality Traits You Share With Your Dog

Analysis by [Dr. Karen Shaw Becker](#)

If you've spent much time around dogs and their humans, you may have noticed that many of these pairs seem to have similar personalities. There's the outgoing guy and his equally friendly Golden Retriever, or the slightly reserved woman and her small, [shy dog](#).

If you've suspected there's more to these similarities than your own observations, as it turns out, you may be right. According to a 2012 study, dog personality is indeed strongly linked to human personality.¹

Dog-Owner Pairs Share Five Personality Traits

The study, conducted by university researchers in Hungary and Austria, investigated links between dog and owner personalities in those two countries and found significant positive correlations in "The Big Five" personality dimensions:

- Neuroticism
- Extraversion
- Conscientiousness
- Agreeableness
- Openness

According to the study authors:

*"This similarity could not be attributed solely to the owners' self-projection, since the similarity in the first four dimensions was also significant when an independent peer person assessed the dog instead of the owner."*²

The researchers uncovered cultural differences in the correlation pattern, with more and stronger correlations among Hungarian owners and their dogs. And interestingly, in households with more than one dog, the dogs' personalities complemented each other, which suggests possible differences in the dogs' role.

"Our results provide the first evidence that dogs do resemble their owners suggesting potential applied utility as well as indicating that dog-owner relationship could be a useful model of human social relationships," write the study authors.

Is Our Subconscious in Play When We Select a Particular Dog?

According to veterinary behavior technician Jenn Fiendish, owner of Happy Power Behavior and Training in Portland, Oregon, people tend to subconsciously select animals they believe will complement their lifestyles.

"One explanation why dog behavior and personality [are] so intertwined with that of their humans is a tendency for people to select animals who complement their own lives," Fiendish told PetMD. *"A calm human will often choose a calm dog, or an anxious person will adopt a frightened dog, for example."*³

Veterinarian Dr. Patrick Mahaney, owner of California Pet Acupuncture and Wellness (CPAW) told PetMD that in his experience, clients with what appear to be "neurotic tendencies" tend to select [high-energy dogs](#).

"Such neurotic owners seem to seek out Weimaraners, Vizslas, herding dogs and other breeds and their mixes that often would feed off of the amped-up energy of their owners," according to Mahaney.

While some people may naturally gravitate to dogs whose energy matches their own, I still see a lot of first-time dog owners choose dogs or puppies based on looks, or cuteness. Most veterinarians will agree with me that choosing a family member based on looks isn't a wise idea.

Your Emotional State May Mold Your Dog's Personality

Given the very long history of the human-canine bond, it's really not surprising that the personalities of domesticated dogs tend to mirror those of their owners. Research shows that [dogs pick up on, respond to, and even mirror our emotions](#).

"I have observed pets in households where the owners are under a lot of stress [who will] subsequently exhibit behavior problems [e.g., inappropriate elimination, destructive behavior, barking, howling, and decreased appetite] which could be attributed to the owners' lack of calming energy," says Mahaney.

Interestingly, one of the ways dogs sense our emotions is through their [incredible sense of smell](#). The results of a 2017

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Personality Traits...from p. 3

study⁴ in which dogs were exposed to human “fear sweat” and “happy sweat” samples showed that they relaxed in the presence of the happy sweat sample. However, the dogs exposed to the fear sweat sample displayed frequent stress-related behaviors and also had consistently higher heart rates than the dogs in the happy sweat sample group.

“While the dogs were clearly responding emotionally to the scent of fear,” writes dog expert Stanley Coren Ph.D., *“it seemed as though their response mirrored the emotion that they were detecting in that they were acting in a fearful manner themselves.”*

There was no evidence of aggression toward either the owner, the stranger, or the scent dispensing apparatus.”⁵

The thing that amazed me was how quickly the dogs picked up and reacted to the fear samples; it was almost immediate. And although the sweat samples were blinded (the researchers didn’t know which sample they were testing), it was clear from the dogs’ behavior which samples contained “fear sweat.”

Cortisol Levels Suggest Dogs and Their Humans Are in ‘Stress Sync’

According to the results of a 2019 study, chronic stress in dog parents can transfer to their canine companions.⁶ The study, titled “Long-term stress levels are synchronized in dogs and their owners,” involved 58 owners of either Border Collies or Shetland Sheepdogs, and the researchers analyzed cortisol levels in hair from both the owners and their dogs.

The researchers discovered that the cortisol level patterns in the humans and their dogs closely matched in both winter and summer months, which suggests their stress levels were in synch. Interestingly, the synchronization effect appears stronger between owners of [competitive dogs](#) than between owners of regular family dogs.

According to study co-author Lina Roth, the bond that develops between an owner and a competitive dog during training may intensify the dog’s emotional reliance on the owner, which in turn could increase the degree of cortisol synchronization.

The study authors believe owners influence their dogs vs. the other way around, because certain human personality traits (e.g., neuroticism,

conscientiousness, and openness) appear to affect canine cortisol levels. In addition, it’s possible this mostly one-way influence is because dog owners are the proverbial “center of the universe” to their pets, whereas humans generally have broader social networks.

Since we know based on scientific evidence that dogs can see, hear and even smell our emotions and that they react to all that sensory input, you can take steps to increase your own pet’s comfort and happiness, and decrease his stress by modifying your interactions with him. Your goal should be to gain and maintain his trust by making him feel safe and loved in your presence.

Toward this end, it’s important to [pay attention to how you’re feeling when you’re around your dog](#), as well as the emotions you direct toward him. This is especially critical in situations you know will be stressful for him, for example, veterinary visits.

A big concern for me, as a veterinarian, is how long-term exposure to human stress and emotional imbalances in the home (fear, anger, frustration, etc.) impact our pets’ health without our knowledge. When Rodney Habib and I were working on our [dog cancer documentary](#), almost every expert we interviewed brought up the role of stress in canine disease — a topic that hasn’t been studied.

These studies bring up the question of how negative human emotions play into health and disease patterns in pets. Hopefully, we’ll begin to answer these important questions in the near future and in the meantime, this is reason enough, in my opinion, to be conscientiously aware of the emotional health and wellbeing of every family member on a daily basis.



Happy Holidays to
all!

New in the Legislative Action Center: Dogs in Vehicles Policy Resources

AKC Government Relations Department More and more Americans are traveling with their dogs. While by and large this is a great thing, it has raised concerns when dogs are left in vehicles when their health and safety could be at risk.

To address this concern, legislation has been proposed in multiple states over the past few years that allow private citizens to remove animals from vehicles if they believe the animal is in danger. These are commonly known as “Good Samaritan Laws”.

While no one wants to see dogs in danger, there are a number of concerns and unintended consequences that must be considered with this type of legislation. AKC Government Relations has created a new Key Issue page in the Legislative Action Center that provides some talking points and resources regarding this important issue to help legislators develop fair and effective laws to protect dogs – as well as responsible dog owners.

Resources included in the new Dogs in Vehicles Key Issue Page include:

Official AKC policy position statements
A printable issue brief with talking points for legislators

AKC article “Good Samaritan Laws: Unintended Consequences Require a Balanced Approach”

We encourage dog owners to review these materials and share them with lawmakers wanting to introduce legislation on this issue. Also be sure to check back, as more resources, including model legislation, will be coming soon on dogs in vehicles, as well as many other key legislative issues. The AKC Legislative Action Center is a one-stop shop for dog owners, club members, and breeders to find the tools and resources you need to be an advocate for your dogs and breeding program. Be sure to visit www.akcgr.org for the latest legislative alerts, as well as numerous advocacy tools and resources on a broad range of canine legislative issues.

How Do Wildfires and Smoke Affect Dogs?

By AKC Staff

With wildfires ravaging regions of the Western U.S., both humans and pets are at risk of being displaced and inhaling dangerous amounts of smoke. Remember — if you feel the effects of smoke, your pets probably do, too. And if you ever have to evacuate your home, your pets should always go with you.

If you're in an area impacted by wildfires or smoke, don't panic. Here's how to prepare for an emergency, protect your pup from dangerous air quality, and evacuate safely.

What To Do With Your Pets When the Air Is Smoky

During wildfires, the air quality is often dangerous and hazardous to breathe. Some studies estimate that breathing the smoke-filled air is equivalent to smoking more than eight cigarettes a day — and that's for a human! Brachycephalic breeds (such as Pugs and Bulldogs), puppies, and senior dogs may be especially at risk of inhaling too much smoke.

Here's what to do if you experience poor air quality due to smoke:

- Keep your pets inside as much as possible, with your windows shut
- If your dog needs to go to the bathroom, only let them out for short periods of time
- Avoid long walks and activities outdoors
- Watch for signs of smoke inhalation (see below)

There are many ways to keep your pets busy and active while indoors!

Signs Your Pet May Have Inhaled Too Much Smoke

Call your veterinarian right away if your dog exhibits any of the following symptoms:

- Coughing
- Trouble breathing
- Wheezing or loud breathing
- Fatigue or disorientation
- Reduced appetite
- Reduced thirst

- Red eyes, excessive tearing or blinking, or pawing at eyes (indicate cornea trauma)

Do Facemasks Protect Dogs Against Smoke?

While most people have gotten used to wearing facemasks to combat COVID-19, they can also be a tool for protecting humans against poor air quality. However, no evidence has been seen that masks protect against carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, and cyanide, which are some of the most dangerous aspects of smoke inhalation. Not enough research has been done to support any effectiveness on masks to protect animals. The best plan is to keep both you and your animals indoors as much as possible.

Preparing Your Pets For Fire Evacuation

It's important to remember that your pets are a part of your family, so if you have to evacuate, your animals should go with you. This is why you should have an evacuation plan ready before you even think you may need it.

Make sure your dog is microchipped. A microchip allows veterinarians and shelter workers to scan your pet and access your contact information. It could be essential to being reunited with your dog if you get separated. Keep your dog's microchip registration up to date with your most recent phone number and address. But don't forget the low-tech option too. Your dog should be wearing a collar with up-to-date identification tags. Finally, have copies of all your dog's important documents. Consider including:

- Vaccination certificates and most recent heartworm test results.
- Information about any health concerns, medications, or behavior problems.
- Contact information for your veterinarian.
- Identification information including proof of ownership and a current photo of you with your dog in case your dog gets lost.

Pack a Fire Evacuation Kit

A pet disaster preparedness kit should include everything your dog will need in an emergency evacuation. Consider your

dog's basic needs, safety, and any medical issues. Keep it in an easy-to-carry waterproof container and store it where you can easily get to it. Your dog's go-bag should include items such as:

- Bottled drinking water (during an emergency, tap water can be contaminated).
- Food in waterproof containers or cans. (Choose pop-top tins or pack a can opener.) Bring enough for at least two weeks.
- Food and water bowls.
- Prescription medications and other required health supplies such as tick medication and heartworm preventative.
- A dog first aid kit.
- Poop bags and other clean-up supplies.
- Familiar items like toys, bedding, and blankets to comfort your dog.
- Stress-relieving items like an anxiety vest or calming sprays if your dog is prone to anxiety.

How to Evacuate With a Dog

Always bring your pets with you when evacuating your home. Pack your pet's emergency kit and documents and make sure you have a pet-friendly place to stay. Whether you're staying with family, at a shelter, or a pet-friendly hotel, there are several options for traveling with your pets.

In the unfortunate event that you are separated from your pet or lose your pet, contact AKC Reunite. Above all, stay vigilant, stay indoors if you can, and call your veterinarian if you notice any changes in your dog.





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Bouquets & Biscuits

* **New CH SUMERWYND STAND UP** is the 72nd dog to carry the "Sumerwynd" baton across the AKC Conformation finish line. Her title was completed with a 4-point major at the Charlottesville-Albermarle KC Show in Doswell, VA. "Violet" is the third champion from a litter sired by GCH Earthsong Remedy For The Blues (19 CHS) and produced from Sumerwynd Sunsational (4CHS) for breeder-owner Wade Bogart "Sumerwynd"

The 2023 Judging Specialty and Roving winners are:

Louisville, KY - March 18, 2023
Richard W Powell - Regular Judge
Shawne Imler - Sweeps Judge

Montgomery - October 8, 2023
Mary Paisley - Regular Judge
Vicki Kubic - Sweeps Judge



FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE: The following information is given to help conduct AMSC business more efficiently. Please remember that the Secretary and the AMSCOPE editor should **BOTH** be notified of address changes, club officers and specialty results.

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