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AMSCOPE

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The Link Between Cognitive Decline and Behavior Changes

Analysis by Dr. Karen Shaw Becker

To preserve cognitive health, your older dog should be offered a nutritionally optimal, species-specific diet and beneficial supplements along with adequate age-appropriate exercise, socialization, and mental stimulation

It's also important to minimize all potential stressors in your older dog's lifestyle and environment, and schedule regular veterinary wellness exams

Many senior dogs are easy to spot by their increasingly grey or white muzzles, their slowness or unsteadiness as they rise from lying down, or their need to nap more often.

Physical signs of aging in dogs are easily recognizable, but behavior changes that also often occur aren't always as obvious. In an older dog with no history of behavior problems, the cause is typically either an underlying medical condition or cognitive decline. That's why if your dog's behavior is changing, it's time to make an appointment with your veterinarian for a senior wellness checkup.

Senior and geriatric patients should ideally see the vet 2 to 3 times a year, because after about age 8 (younger for large and giant breeds), a dog's wellness and nutritional needs can require fine-tuning every 4 to 6 months. In older pets it's also very important to review weight, muscle tone, joint range of motion, diet, supplement protocol, and exercise habits at least semi-annually.

Signs of Cognitive Decline in Older Dogs
Cognitive decline (CD) in an older dog is a diagnosis of exclusion, meaning all potential medical causes for a behavior change (more about this shortly) have been ruled out. Veterinarians sometimes use the acronym DISHA to evaluate cognitive dysfunction (CD) in a senior dog:

•Disorientation — Is the dog walking aimlessly about the house, staring at the walls, or even losing his balance and falling? The key here is that even when he's in his normal, familiar environment, he gets disoriented, for example, he goes out his doggy door to the backyard, and then seems to forget how to get back in. There can also be a loss of spatial awareness.

•Interactions — Is the dog interacting differently with family members or other pets in the home? This can involve sudden or increasing irritability or even aggression in a dog who's been friendly and social all her life. It can also take the form of withdrawal from family members and the features of daily life she was once very interested in, such as a knock at the door or the appearance of her leash, meaning she's about to get a walk.

•Sleep — Is the dog no longer sleeping through the night, or is restless or wakes frequently? Like many older people, senior dogs can experience changes in sleep patterns or even a disruption in circadian rhythms. Your dog may begin pacing at night instead of falling into a deep slumber as she once did. Some dogs even reverse their schedules entirely, doing during the daytime what they used to do at night and vice versa.

•House soiling — Is the dog no longer alerting his owner when he needs to go out? Is he urinating or leaking urine indoors? When a dog seemingly "loses" his housetraining, there's no clearer evidence that something's amiss with either his health or his cognition.

•Activity level changes — Does the dog seem restless, agitated, or anxious? Does he have a decreased appetite? You may notice your dog is no longer coming to the door to greet you or loses focus and no longer responds as she once did to familiar stimuli.

Some dogs seem to forget how to get the food or water out of their bowls or forget where the bowls are located. There can also be periods of restlessness, or repetitive behaviors such as pacing in circles, head bobbing or leg shaking.

Clinical signs of cognitive dysfunction are found in 50% of dogs over the age of 11, and by the age of 15, 68% display at least one sign.

Underlying Medical Conditions Must Be Ruled Out First

Any sort of underlying medical problem has the potential to trigger behavioral problems in older pets. If your dog is feeling pain or general discomfort, often from either a musculoskeletal or gastrointestinal (GI) problem, it can cause her to pace, become restless, wake up during the night, and even show aggression.

For example, dogs with underlying musculoskeletal problems may show aggression when lying down and forced off furniture, the tendency to slide on smooth flooring, excessive licking of their feet or joints and weight gain due to being less active.

GI problems can trigger sudden uncharacteristic food aggression, for example, your dog is refusing to eat but doesn't want you remove the food bowl. She may have nausea, which in dogs often takes the form of chewing things, as well as excessive swallowing and/or picky eating.

Endocrine diseases can also cause behavior changes in dogs. Hyperadrenocorticism (Cushing's disease) can cause irritability, lethargy, excessive thirst and urination, and even food aggression.

Just like older people, older dogs are more likely to develop diseases, and those diseases can lead to behavior changes. I can't emphasize strongly enough that cognitive dysfunction in dogs is a diagnosis of exclusion. There are many conditions your older pet can acquire that mimic the signs of cognitive decline, so it's important to rule out all other physical reasons for a change in behavior.

For example, a small seizure can cause your dog to stand still and stare. If she seems detached, she could be in pain. Inappropriate elimination can be due to kidney disease. These disorders and many others can result in a change in behavior unrelated to cognitive decline. That's why it's so important to rule out all possible alternative reasons, especially in aging pets.

5 Ways to Help Your Aging Dog Stay Mentally Sharp

1. Offer lots of opportunities for exercise, socialization, and mental stimulation — Senior and even geriatric dogs still need daily exercise to maintain good health and physical conditioning. While older dogs can't exercise or compete with the same intensity as their younger counterparts, they still de-

con't on p. 3 ...**COGNITIVE**

**The deadline
for the June issue is
May 8**

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LOOK

Please let me know if you make a change

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It is case sensitive.

Here's the link to the Members Section:

<http://amsc.us/members-log-in>

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 – Grayslake, IL
June 19, 2021

Regular Classes: Peggy Beisel-McIlwaine
Sweeps: Mary Paisley

Montgomery County
October 10, 2021

Regular Classes: Bruce Schwartz
Sweeps: Tatiana Meyers

Roving – Northern Calif Terrier Assn
July 8, 9 in conjunction Sacramento
July 10, 11 in Lodi CA

Regular Classes: Marcia Feld
Sweeps: Amy Gordon

Montgomery County
October 9, 2022

Regular Classes: Bergit Coady-Kabel
Sweeps: Cheryl Coffman

Dogs Eating Cicadas: Tasty Treat or Trouble?

Harriet Meyers

- After a 17-year hibernation, trillions of cicadas are due to emerge in parts of the U.S.
- Cicada exoskeletons are difficult to digest and can cause dogs to suffer serious consequences if eaten.
- [summer](#)
- [safety](#)
- [health](#)
- [spring](#)

Sometime this spring, when the soil temperature reaches 64 degrees, your dog may suddenly start digging up the yard. He can hear something you can't yet hear – juvenile cicadas tunneling through the ground getting ready to emerge.

Most of the more than 3,000 types of cicadas appear every 2-to-5 years, and their cycles can vary. But the periodical cicadas spend exactly 13 or 17 years underground, and when they appear – trillions surface, blanketing the ground, cars, trees, and houses. According to entomologists, densities can be as great as 1.5 million cicadas per acre.

This time the big brood is coming. After a 17-year hibernation, trillions of cicadas are due to emerge in Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, North Carolina, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia and Washington, D.C.

Cicadas Can Cause Stomach Upset

Cicadas don't bite or sting, so no problem – right? Wrong. If you have a dog who likes to munch on whatever can be found on the ground, you need to prepare to stop him from devouring this plentiful treat.

"In most cases, your dog will be fine after eating a few cicadas," says Dr. Jerry Klein, AKC chief veterinary officer. "However, dogs that gorge on the large, crunchy insects will find the exoskeleton difficult to digest and can suffer serious consequences."

According to Dr. Klein, aftereffects can include severe stomach upset and abdominal pain, [vomiting](#), and bloody [diarrhea](#). Some dogs may require intravenous fluids, pain medications, gastroprotectants, or anti-nausea drugs.

Dogs Overindulging in Cicadas Can:

- Experience mild to serious GI upset.
- Choke on the stiff wings or hard exoskeleton.
- Suffer an [allergic reaction](#).
- Consume unhealthy amounts of pesticides.

How Long Will the Threat Last?

Cicadas live underground for most of their lives, where they drink from plant roots and develop into adults. They emerge from the ground to sing, mate, and lay eggs. The songs, sung mostly by males, can reach 100 decibels. Females lay fertilized eggs in the branches of plants, where they hatch and burrow underground. The adult cicadas die, and the world becomes a little bit quieter.

The cicada cycle will last about 6 weeks, so those emerging in mid-May should be gone by late June, depending on the weather. Then the babies or nymphs will dig into the ground to suck tree roots for another 17 years.

Of course, those tasty exoskeletons that adult cicadas shed will still be all over the ground. So you'll need to be vigilant with your dog for a while longer.

Bottom line: Preventing your dog from eating cicadas is the safest choice. Get ahead of the game and teach the "[leave it](#)" command. And if you have a pup who likes to act like an anteater, you may need to be constant companions when he goes outside for a couple of months.



COGNITIVE...from p. 1

rive tremendous benefit from regular walks and other age-appropriate physical activity on a daily basis, or even better, twice daily.

There are three types of strengthening exercises that can also be of tremendous help to aging canine bodies:

- Passive range-of-motion (PROM) exercises can benefit both incapacitated and physically healthy pets

- Balance and proprioception (spatial orientation and movement) exercises help older pets remain flexible while also encouraging improved balance and physical stability

- Targeted strengthening exercises are designed to work the big muscle groups that help with standing, walking and running

No matter how old your dog is he still needs regular social interaction with other pets and/or people. As is the case with humans as we age, if dogs don't stay active and involved in life, their world can become a confusing, intimidating place. Your pet needs regular exposure to other pets and people, but never to the point of overstimulation. Short periods of socialization and playtime in controlled situations are ideal.

Food puzzle and treat release toys provide fun and a good mental workout, as does nose work and brief training sessions to refresh his memory or teach him a new skill.

2.Schedule regular senior wellness check-ups — I recommend twice-yearly wellness visits for pets no matter the age, but this becomes even more important for dogs getting up in years. Keeping abreast of your animal companion's physical and mental changes as she ages is the best way to catch any disease process early.

Ask your functional medicine veterinarian to perform a blood test, including an A1c test to check your pet's internal organ and metabolic health to make sure you're identifying possible issues early on. Keeping abreast of her physical and mental changes as she ages is the very best way to catch any disease process early.

Over-vaccinating is something older animals do not need, so advocate for your older dog by refusing additional vaccines and insisting on titer tests instead. A titer is a blood test that measures protective immunity. Chances are your dog is very well-protected. Switch to titering to help reduce her toxic load.

3.Minimize stress in all aspects of your dog's life — Fortunately, there are many things you can do to minimize anxiety and stress in your older dog.

Senior and geriatric dogs, especially those with

CD, are often disoriented, so sticking to a consistent daily routine your pet can count on can help him stay oriented, which will in turn reduce his anxiety. Try to get up and go to bed at the same time each day, feed him at the same times, and go for walks on a set schedule.

Keeping him at a healthy weight and physically active will help control arthritis and degenerative joint disease as he ages, insuring he remains comfortable and mobile. Acupuncture and chiropractic care, stretching, and hydrotherapy (exercising in water) can also provide enormous benefits in keeping dogs mobile in their later years. Regular massage can help keep your senior dog's muscles toned and reduce the slackening that comes with aging. Massaged muscles are looser, which makes it easier for him to move around comfortably.

Massage also improves circulation and encourages lymphatic drainage. It can ease the stiffness of arthritis, which helps him maintain his normal gait and active lifestyle. Massage also loosens the muscles around joints, which helps promote ease of movement.

If your dog is having some urine dribbling or incontinence as a result of his age (and not caused by an underlying condition that should be addressed), provide him with more frequent potty trips outside. You can also reintroduce him to a crate if he was crate trained initially. Acupuncture can also be very beneficial for age-related incontinence.

If your dog has problems hearing or seeing, use odor cues like essential oils or pheromone products to help him find his way around. Also consider purchasing or building ramps if he's having trouble getting into the car or up on the bed or a favorite chair, and if he's slipping or unsure on bare floors, add some runners, yoga mats or area rugs.

For sleep problems, try increasing his daytime activity level. Let him sleep in your bedroom. Sleeping near you should help ease any anxiety that may be contributing to his nighttime restlessness.

Guide him with clear cues and easy-to-follow instructions, and when you talk to him, keep your voice quiet, calm and loving.

4.Feed a nutritionally optimal, species-specific fresh food diet — A species-specific, nutritionally balanced diet that is rich in healthy fats, including omega-3 fatty acids such as krill oil and others such as MCT oil, is very important for cognitive health.

The best fuel for an aging dog is a variety of living, whole foods suitable for a carnivore. Eliminate all refined carbohydrates (which are just unnecessary sugar), as well as

grains, potatoes and legumes. Replace those unnecessary carbs with extra high-quality protein. Eliminate extruded diets (kibble) to avoid the toxic byproducts of the manufacturing process.

Processed dog foods are manufactured in a way that creates byproducts that can affect cognitive health, including heterocyclic amines, acrylamides and advanced glycation end products (AGEs). Fresh, biologically appropriate foods provide the whole food nutrients your pet's aging brain requires.

The right diet will also support the microbiome, which has been linked to improved cognitive health in humans, and I've seen an improvement in dogs as well.

5.Provide beneficial supplements — In dogs with CD and older pets in general, nutraceuticals can significantly improve memory, and the effects are long-lasting. Studies of medium-chain triglycerides (MCTs) such as coconut oil show they can significantly improve cognitive function in older dogs. Supplementing with MCTs is a great way to offer an instant fuel source for your dog's brain.

I recommend 1/4 teaspoon of coconut oil for every 10 pounds of body weight, added daily to food. If you use MCT oil instead of coconut oil start slowly and use less, as loose stools aren't uncommon when beginning this supplement.

I also recommend providing a source of methyl donors, such as SAMe (S-adenosylmethionine), which can assist in detoxification and reduce inflammation. Other supplements to consider are jellyfish extracts, glutathione and resveratrol, which is Japanese knotweed. Japanese knotweed has been proven to help reduce free radical damage and beta-amyloid deposits.

Ginkgo biloba may improve blood flow to the brain. Phosphatidylserine and ubiquinol, which is the reduced form of CoQ10, feed your dog's mitochondria and improve cellular energy.

When it comes to general health supplements, I typically recommend digestive enzymes and probiotics for all older pets. I also recommend an omega-3 fatty acid supplement such as sustainably sourced krill oil (my favorite, because it's the cleanest) or algal DHA for pets who can't tolerate seafood.

Most older dogs can benefit from joint and antioxidant supplements such as glucosamine sulfate with MSM, cetyl myristoleate, eggshell membrane or perna mussel (green-lipped clam) to support their aging joints, as well as natural anti-inflammatory formulas (including curcumin and proteolytic enzymes) that help manage pain.

How Your Dog's Whining Affects You

Analysis by Dr. Karen Shaw Becker

According to a study published last year by Aarhus University researchers in Denmark, pet parents are very tuned in to the sounds that dogs make when they're looking for attention.¹ According to the university's news release on the study, canine companions communicate distress to humans more effectively than cats, and in fact, "... adults rate dog whines as sounding just as sad as a human baby's cries."²

"Pet ownership is associated with greater sensitivity to pet distress sounds, and it may be part of the reason why we are willing to spend large amounts of time and resources on our domestic companions," says lead study author Christine Parsons, an associate professor based at the Interacting Minds Centre at the Department of Clinical medicine at Aarhus University.

"It might also explain why we find interacting with pets so rewarding, and are emotionally impacted by both positive communication signals, like purring and negative, like meows or whines."³

The study, titled "Pawsitively sad: pet-owners are more sensitive to negative emotion in animal distress vocalizations" was part of a project to build a major database of emotional sounds, the original intent of which was to test the instinctive responses parents have to their children.

Dogs Sound Sadder Than Cats to Both Dog and Cat Owners

For the study, researchers tested more than 500 young adults and found that dog whines sounded sadder to both dog and cat owners compared to people without pets. Cat meows sounded sadder only to cat owners.

"The result suggests that dogs, more effectively than cats, communicate distress to humans and that pet ownership is linked to greater emotional sensitivity to these sounds. For sounds that we need to respond to, like a dog that is utterly dependent on its human host for food and care, it makes sense that we find these sounds emotionally compelling," says Parsons.

Study co-author Katherine Young makes the point that generally speaking, dogs require more dedicated care than cats. For example, dogs need to be walked. In addition, whereas dogs are considered fully domesticated, cats are semi-domesticated and more independent (not to mention more mysterious). They more often prefer to do their own thing.

"This difference in animal dependence may explain why dog whines are rated as more negative than cat meows by all adults, including cat-owners. Dogs may simply have more effective distress signals than cats," says Young.

Dogs Rarely Whine for No Reason

It's important to keep in mind that when your dog communicates with you, she has a pur-

pose in mind and it's your job to figure out what she's trying to tell you. Professional dog trainer Pat Miller, writing for *Whole Dog Journal*, lists several potential causes for whining, including pain or discomfort, stress or anxiety, frustration, excitement, and appeasement.⁴

- **Pain or discomfort whining** — The when and where of your dog's whining is important in narrowing down its cause. For example, if she's normally happy in her crate at night but suddenly starts whining in the wee hours, and especially if she also starts soiling or throwing up in her crate, she very likely has a digestive or urinary tract problem that needs attention.

If your older dog whines instead of jumping up onto the couch or into the car as she always has, she may be dealing with arthritis or another condition that is limiting her mobility and causing her discomfort.

A good rule of thumb is that if your dog begins whining in normal, everyday situations and/or at unexpected times of the day or night, a visit to your veterinarian is in order to investigate whether a painful or uncomfortable underlying medical condition is in play.

- **Stress and anxiety whining** — As Miller points out, "Anything that causes [your dog] to be fearful can contribute to ... whining, and some breeds even seem to have a genetic predisposition to whining."

If your furry companion whines as you're preparing to leave the house, he may have separation anxiety, which is an increasingly common problem in dogs today. Miller offers the following suggestions for dealing with anxiety-related whining:

"To help him be less anxious so he will whine less, make a list of things that cause your dog fear or stress, and pick two or three to start counter-conditioning, that is, changing how he feels about those things, so they no longer cause him stress or fear.

When you can tick one stressor off your list, pick another to begin working on, until you have addressed enough of them that whining is no longer a problem.

Additionally, anxiety-induced and the other types of whining may improve with the application of the ever-growing list of various tools and protocols we have to help our dogs be calm." (More about those shortly.)

- **Frustration whining** — Miller also calls this "demand whining" because in most cases, dogs become frustrated when their demands aren't being met. The best way to curb frustration whining is to observe when it occurs, and then head it off at the pass by either giving your dog what she's waiting for before she has a chance to whine for it, or by offering a distraction such as a food-dispensing toy before she starts whining.

Now, we're assuming here that what your dog is demanding is legit, such as her morning walk, her afternoon ball-chasing session, or some other fun activity she counts on each day. But if she's whining for your ice cream cone or a sip of your beer, it's a whole different ballgame.

In this case, your dog is frustration-whining because she wants something she shouldn't have. Since presumably she's been conditioned to want it, instead of giving it to her, you'll need to work to extinguish her expectation that she'll get it.

- **Excited whining** — As Miller observes, "... some dogs whine just because they are so happy they can barely contain themselves." This type of whining tends to happen leading up to an adventure, which for your dog can include a car ride, an off-leash hike, or even just a walk around the block. As whining goes, the excited variety is probably something we should accept and even be grateful for!

- **Appeasement whining** — This somewhat uncommon type of whining, according to Miller, generally occurs in social interactions between dogs. "In this case," she writes, "it is a healthy communication, and not one you want to interfere with."

Advertisement

10 Tips to Help an Anxious Dog

No matter the reason for your dog's vocalizations, most canine companions can benefit from a reduced amount of stress in their lives. When you must leave your dog at home alone, leave him with an article of clothing or blanket with your scent on it. Also leave a treat-release toy for him to focus on in your absence. Place small treats around the house for him to discover, along with his favorite toys.

Add a flower essence blend like Separation Anxiety from Jackson Galaxy's Solutions to her drinking water. This works wonders for some dogs. And put on some soothing doggy music before you leave. If you've adopted a dog who may have had a rocky start in life, I also highly recommend a program called A Sound Beginning, which is designed to help rescue dogs and adoptive guardians learn to communicate effectively and form a life-long bond.

Invest in an Adaptil collar or diffuser for your dog. These products release a pheromone that's designed to have a calming effect on dogs.

Make sure your dog gets plenty of exercise (like an all-out 40-minute run prior to being left alone all day), playtime, mental stimulation and TLC. The fuller her life is when you're around, the calmer she'll be when you're not. Play calm, soothing music before a possible

cont'd on p.6...**WHINING**

NEW APPLICANTS

Murray Clark
30 Lioba Drive
Toronto, Ontario
Canada M1L 4V4
murray.clark@bell.net
416-873-5777

Murray is a non-US resident applying for Foreign Membership. He has been involved with Miniature Schnauzers since the 1970s. His parents were the breeders and he was the handler until 1990 when he took over the breeding as well. He enjoys exhibiting in the American shows and would like to be able to contribute. He agrees to abide by the AMSC Code of Ethics and Breed Standard. Murray has bred ten litters in the past five years, and he attends approximately thirty dog events per year. He is willing to share his long-time experience with breeding and handling and anywhere else he can be of service to the club. Murray is a C.P.A.
Sponsors: Lynda Berar and Heather Orr

Tricia Carmack
19176 Tarman Rd
New Paris, IN 46553
blessinhausms@yahoo.com
574-238-1977

Tricia has wanted to join for a few years. She agrees with what AMSC stands for. She believes that in order to preserve our breed we need to be held at a higher standard to ensure keeping to the breed standard as closely as we possibly can and in an ethical way. She agrees to abide by the Code of Ethics and Breed Standard. She has six dogs and most are Champion or Grand Champions. She has been involved in Agility and Obedience for thirty years and Conformation for eleven years. She has been breeding for four years. She is also a 4-H dog club trainer for nine years. Tricia attends 12-24 shows per year and belongs to Michiana Kennel Club, Northern IN/Southern Michigan and is Recording Secretary for Greater Columbus Miniature Schnauzer Club. She owns a dog grooming shop and is a dog trainer.

Sponsors: Gale Schnetzer and Carma Ewer

The Portland MSC
will be holding its Designated
Specialty with the Southern
Oregon Terrier Association
on July 16 2021 at Bandon HS
in Bandon, Oregon
Judge is Philip Freilich
Sweepstakes Judge is Laura
Reeves



Kennalea Bolton Pratt
August 27, 1942 - March 04, 2021

Kennalea Bolton Pratt passed away on March 4, 2021, at the age of 78, at home surrounded by her family after a short illness. She earned a degree in Political Science at Southwest Missouri State University (SMS) and graduated with Honors in 1980.

Throughout her life, Kennalea was an avid, talented, and professional exhibitor of Miniature Schnauzers. She was a lifetime member of the American Miniature Schnauzer Club of America. Kennalea was a mentor to many newcomers to the breed and she was highly respected, as well as, admired by both her competitors and her peers for the many talents she displayed and the way she taught others. Kennalea eventually became a show judge for Miniature Schnauzers due to her expertise with the breed. She loved every animal that found its way to the family home and always took care of them for life. Whenever a dog did leave, Kennalea was famous for doing background checks and ensuring that the new owners would care and love their new family member. She always stayed in touch with the new owners to ensure the well-being of her beloved dogs throughout their life.

Popular flea collar linked to almost 1,700 pet deaths. The EPA has issued no warning.
SERESTO

Montgomery/MCKC Show Week

Hotel Reservation Information Morris & Essex Hotel Edison Red Roof

860 New Durham Road
Edison, NJ 08817

732-248-9300 (hotel direct)

1. Block Name: B194AMSC.

2. To make your reservation: Call 1-800-733-7663 to book your room; open 7 days a week, 8AM-1 AM EST

3. Block room rate available until Friday, 9/3/2021; unclaimed rooms will then be

released and group discount unavailable

4. Group rate is available for 10/3/2021 - 10/5/2021, combination of Deluxe 2 Bed and Superior King rooms, non-smoking, \$67.99 - \$80.74 per night, 14.6% tax not included

5. You must change or cancel by 9/3/2021 to avoid first night billings
MCKC/Hatboro/Devon Hotel
Homewood Suites Philadelphia/Valley Forge

681 Shannondell Blvd
Audubon, PA 19403

610-539-7300 (hotel direct)

1. Block Name: AMS

2. To make your reservation:

a. Click or copy this booking link:
<https://tinyurl.com/rbetrp96>

b. Call 1-610-539-7300, option "0"
3. Block room rate available until Sunday 8/29/2021; unclaimed rooms will then be released and group discount unavailable

4. Group rate is available for 10/5/2021 - 10/11/2021, combination of 1 Bedroom Suite Kings (\$149), 2 Bedroom Suites (\$199) and Studio Kings (\$129), non-smoking, 10% tax not included

5. \$75 non-refundable pet fee
Member Meeting and Social 10/9/2021

At this time, we are planning to have the member meeting and social at the Jeffersonville Golf Club, a short drive from the hotel. Additional information will be

available closer to the event.

Any questions, contact me at
barbaramd_2000@yahoo.com or 1-215-896-9666.

Barbara Donahue
MCKC Hospitality

Science-Based Benefits of Having a Dog

By [Kaitlyn Arford](#)

Unconditional love. Devoted companionship. Constant entertainment. Most of us dog lovers know that life is better with a dog. But is that knowledge based on a feeling—or is there something else at work? There is: Science.

Spending time with canine companions does wonders for your wellbeing. Recent research shows that owning a dog is good for you physically and emotionally. Dogs make us happier, healthier, and help us cope with a crisis—and can even help you get a date. Read on for 10 science-backed benefits of having a dog.

1. Dogs make us feel less alone.

Dogs can be there for you even when people can't. They offer unconditional love, emotional support, and constant cuddles that help stave off social isolation. A small [Australian study](#) discovered that dog ownership reduces loneliness.

A national [survey](#) of pet owners and non-pet owners by the Human Animal Bond Research Institute found that 85 percent of respondents believe that interaction with pets reduces loneliness. Most agree that human-pet interactions can help address social isolation.

2. Dogs are good for your heart.

Owning a dog can help you live longer. A comprehensive [review](#) of studies published between 1950 and 2019 found that dog owners had a lower risk of death. Studies suggest that dog owners have lower blood pressure levels and improved responses to stress.

Even just living with a dog makes a difference—people who had experienced previous coronary events had an even higher level of risk reduction for death. Research has concluded that the bond between humans and dogs reduces stress, which is a major cause of cardiovascular problems.

3. Dogs help you stop stressing out.

Your canine companion can offer comfort and ease your worries. [Multiple studies](#) show that dogs and therapy dogs help alleviate stress and anxiety.

Even just petting a familiar dog lowers blood pressure, heart rate, slows breathing, and relaxes muscle tension. Scientists at [Washington State University](#) discovered that just 10 minutes petting a dog can have a significant impact. Study participants had a significant reduction in cortisol, a major stress hormone.

4. Dogs help us cope with crisis

Dogs help us recover psychologically from a crisis. Purdue University's [College of Veterinary Medicine](#) discovered that military veterans with PTSD do better both

physiologically and psychologically when they have a service dog. Veterans with a service dog had significantly fewer symptoms of PTSD and showed improved coping skills.

5. Dogs encourage you to move.

Those long treks along sidewalks, trails, and paths add up. A 2019 [British study](#) discovered that dog owners are nearly four times more likely than non-dog owners to meet daily physical activity guidelines. Dog owners spend nearly 300 minutes every week walking with their dogs. That's 200 more minutes walking than people without a pup of their own.

6. Dogs make you more attractive—even virtually.

If you're looking for a date, it might be time to get a dog. A dog's presence may make people appear more likeable and attractive. In a [series of studies](#), men were more likely to get a woman's phone number when they had a dog with them. In another [study](#), researchers asked individuals to rate people in photographs and found that people looked happier and more relaxed when they appeared with a dog.

A study by [Pet Wingman](#) found that men and women swipe right more when they include a profile photo of their pup. Women benefited more than men with dogs in their profiles. (And finding Fido photos on your camera roll shouldn't be a problem—a [study](#) found that 65 percent of dog owners admit to taking more photos of their dog than their significant other.)

7. Dogs make us more social.

Walking with a canine companion can make us more approachable and give people a conversation starter. Think about how many times you've talked with other people, whether they're your neighbors or new friends at the [dog park](#).

[Researchers](#) have found that about 40 percent of dog owners had an easier time making friends. Dogs are the perfect way to get to know strangers and form new friendships.

A [study](#) at the Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University concluded that people who have a strong attachment to a pet feel more connected in their human relationships and their communities.

8. Dogs are so adorable they make us love them

There's a reason why puppies are so irresistible: a dog's facial features possess an "[infant schema](#)." These "social releasers" trigger an innate caregiver response in humans. So the next time you can't stop watching that

dog video, know those big eyes and floppy ears are scientifically appealing.

9. Dogs make us happier

Just looking at a dog can lift your spirits: a 2009 [study](#) in Japan found that staring into your dog's eyes raises your level of oxytocin, also known as the "love hormone." Besides the general health benefits of owning a dog, they are natural mood boosters. Those with AIDS are less likely to suffer from depression if they own a pet, according to a 2017 [study](#).

10. Dogs help seniors with cognitive function and social interaction

Studies exploring the effects of dogs on seniors found [positive results](#). One [study](#) found that pet therapy improves the cognitive function of residents with mental illness in long-term care. [Another](#) showed significant decreases in agitated behaviors in seniors with dementia and improved social interactions.

A four-footed best friend provides unconditional love and support, which is especially important during tough times. Though people may think we're taking care of our canine companions, it's mutual: Dogs take care of us, and science confirms it.

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stressor occurs. This may relax your dog and have the added bonus of drowning out distressing noises.

If your dog seems to respond well to pressure applied to her body, there are wraps available (e.g., Thundershirt, TTouch anxiety wrap) that many pet parents and veterinarians find extremely helpful.

Ttouch is a specific massage technique that can help anxious pets.

Consult your integrative veterinarian about calming nutraceuticals, or look for pet herbal blends that include holy basil, L-theanine, rhodiola, ashwagandha, GABA, 5-HTP and chamomile.

The essential oil of lavender can also reduce your dog's stress response. I recommend placing a few drops on his collar or bedding before a stressor occurs, if possible, or diffuse the oil around your house for an overall calming effect. There are also great oil blends specifically for calming animals.

If your dog's anxiety seems to be getting worse instead of better, consider an individualized approach to managing her stress by allowing her to choose what best soothes her via applied zoopharmacognosy (self-healing techniques offered through a trained professional), blended with fear free behavior modification.

In Memoriam 2020



The AMSC recognizes the members we have lost in the previous year.

Shirley Cole ~ Galaxy

Richard Darby ~ Starfire

Kennalea Bolton Pratt ~ Starbound



~~ Gone but not forgotten ~~

*We thank them for their contributions to the Miniature
Schnauzer breed and to the AMSC*



AMSCOPE

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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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