

Pet Ownership Guidelines

To promote healthy pets and a mutually beneficial relationship, the AVMA recommends that pet owners:

- Provide lifelong care for the pet or make reasonable efforts to transition care of the animal to another individual or group. This means committing to ensuring your pet's care for their entire life.
- Select pet types and numbers that are suited to your home and lifestyle.
- Establish and maintain a veterinarian-client-patient relationship.
- Provide preventive (e.g., vaccinations, parasite control) and therapeutic health care for your pet(s) in consultation with, and as recommended by, your veterinarian.
- Monitor and identify changes in your pet(s)' health and quality of life and make decisions in consultation with your veterinarian regarding appropriate care or treatment. This includes end-of-life care (e.g., palliative care, hospice, euthanasia).
- Provide appropriate food, water, indoor/outdoor shelter, health care and companionship to promote pet health, safety, and welfare.
- Ensure pets are properly identified (i.e., tags, microchips, or tattoos) and that their registration information in associated databases is kept up-to-date.
- Adhere to state and local ordinances, including licensing, leash, rabies vaccination, and other requirements.
- Manage your pet's reproduction through controlled breeding, containment, or spay/neuter.
- Socialize and appropriately train your pet(s) to facilitate their well-being and the well-being of other animals and people. This includes training for veterinary care and handling.
- Minimize negative impacts on other people, animals, and the environment. This includes proper waste disposal and noise control.
- Provide physical and mental stimulation as well as nutrition appropriate to the species, age, breed, and health status of your pet(s).
- Plan for your pets in case of an emergency or disaster, including assembling an evacuation kit.
- Make arrangements for the care of your pet when or if you are unable to do so.

The AVMA encourages pet owners to invest appropriate planning and resources in pet care to maximize the mutually beneficial relationship that is the human-animal bond.