



14 *(relatively)* inexpensive things

that help pets live longer, healthier lives

FREE

1. Control your pets' diet

Measuring food and matching to your pets' needs today allows you to save money in the long run. You're not starving your cat or dog if you pick the right food and give the right amount. Controlling your pet's weight means you spend less on medical bills for health issues resulting from obesity. Keeping your pet away from people food also means you avoid a lot of gastrointestinal issues, some of which can result in serious hospital stays. You'll also save money on dog food by controlling how much they eat so they don't literally eat you out of house and home.

The one caveat is, your pet's nutritional needs can and will change over time, from puppy and kitten to adult to older to senior. Check in with us if you ever have questions or see any changes in what or how much your pet is eating.

2. Keep your cat indoors

This can help protect your feline friends from a multitude of hazards—cars, feline leukemia, intestinal parasites and fighting with other cats, to name a few. These all result in visits to your veterinarian. Yes, your cat can still sneak

out the door and encounter sick or aggressive cats, and can pick up intestinal parasites in other ways, but indoor living is safer. (And, yes, even for indoor cats, we may recommend intestinal parasite preventives. Even if they stay indoors, they can be affected.)

3. Always use a leash on your dog outdoors

Keeping your pet under control (along with training) keeps them from getting hit by cars and out of violent altercations with other animals.

4. Skip the dog park

Dog parks can be fun and they seem like a good idea. But they can be filled with poorly socialized, unvaccinated dogs and can expose you and your dog to bites or diseases.

5. Learn to trim your pets' nails/claws

Learning to calmly and efficiently cut your dog's nails or your cat's claws is usually possible. Start 'em when they're young, make it fun with treats, and download the handout at dvm360.com/nailtrim for more tips.

LOW COST

6. Train your dog

Start your dog off with proper, class-related training, which leads to a well-socialized dog and decreases the possibility of future behavioral problems requiring medications.

7. Vaccinate

Prevention is pennies compared to treating parvovirus, leptovirus or some other ugly upper respiratory diseases.

8. Keep your dog on heartworm preventives

Prevention is far less expensive than treatment.

9. Get your pet spayed/neutered

Avoid unwanted pregnancies, male dogs roaming and getting lost or hit by cars, prostate issues, aggression issues, territorial marking or humping. Those are all things that can be much more expensive than a spay or neuter.

10. Use flea control

You'll spend less money over the years on skin issues and lower the possibility of lifetime flea allergy dermatitis with this simple preventive.



CHEAPER THAN THE ALTERNATIVE

11. Get your pets' teeth cleaned

Now, hear me out: I know proper dental prophylaxis (a fancy word for a serious cleaning like you get at the dentist yourself) requires anesthesia, so it's not cheap. However, you and your pet will enjoy significantly better quality of life thanks to fresher breath (for your benefit), less dental pain (for the pet's benefit) and a healthier, longer-lived chewing ability.

12. Follow our advice—we're really trying to help!

Your veterinarian has the best interest of your pets at heart and will try to make treating even long-term illnesses as easy as possible for you. A vet's goal is to give you advice so, for example ...

- > your diabetic pet is well-regulated and doesn't require hospitalization.
- > your pet prone to bladder stones

stays on the special diet to avoid future problems and expensive surgery for as long as possible.

- > your pet receives routine bloodwork to ensure that medications are properly dosed and not causing other, worse issues.

13. Get pet insurance

Yes, it can be pricey, but trust us: Veterinarians every day hear from clients who wish they'd gotten insurance policies for their pets before a costly illness or accident happened.

14. See something, make an appointment

If you notice a problem with your pets, get them in sooner instead of waiting. We see so many illnesses too late that could have been treated easier, less expensively, less painfully for the pet and with less inconvenience for the owner.