

Healthy Living

Topic of April

The POWER of PETS

Duke Health and Exercise Research Trials • Research@duke.edu • 919-681-9000

Do you have a pet?

Looking for an excuse to get a pet or add another?

Having a pet improves your health! Most Americans have a pet of some kind. Pets encourage physical activity and exercise. They help manage loneliness and depression. No matter what type of pet you have, having a pet has been shown to:

- ✓ Lower cholesterol levels
- ✓ Lower triglyceride levels
- ✓ Lower blood pressure
- ✓ Lower stress
- ✓ Improve mood
- ✓ Increase opportunities for socialization - CDC

**Picking the
right pet is
important!**

Research your pet of interest

Not all pets are for every household. Take time to research your pet and breed of interest. It is important to make sure the pet is a safe option for you and those you live with. A few things to consider:

- § Pregnant women should not clean litter boxes, handle kittens, or pet rodents
- § Children under 5 should not interact with poultry or reptiles due to potential serious illness from the animals' germs
- § Those with weakened immune systems should be cautious when handling pets; scratches and respiratory droplets can cause serious infections

Educate yourself on the needs of the animal

- How long will this animal live?
- How much food will it need a day?
- Do I have time to properly care and attend to my pet?
- Is there a better option for me?

FUN FACT: Three dogs survived the sinking of the Titanic!

Join the Duke Health and Exercise Research Trials Registry!



We are looking for healthy volunteers and individuals with various medical conditions to join a variety of clinical research studies. To learn more, contact our team @

Research@duke.edu or 919-681-9000

NOT A PET PERSON? TRY MINDFULNESS!

Mindfulness is a practice where you focus on what you are feeling and sensing in the moment. This style of meditation also reduces depression, stress, blood pressure, and improves mood. It has also been shown to improve diabetes control, sleep, and attention spans. - Mayo Clinic

SIMPLE MINDFULNESS EXERCISES CAN BE PERFORMED ANYWHERE, AT ANYTIME

- ✓ Pay attention to things around using your senses
 - ✓ Live in the moment and seek joy
 - ✓ Body scan and relax tense muscles
 - ✓ Focus on breathing and controlling your exhale
- Practicing mindfulness more often, the more natural self-nurturing will become.

Challenge of the Month

Discover your preferred MINDFULNESS mediation technique! Try one form of mediation this week .

"Take care of your body. It's the only place you have to live in."

-Jim Rohn