



Pets help seniors stay healthier and happier, wherever they live, studies show

(BPT) - French novelist Sidonie-Gabrielle Collette once said, "Our perfect companions never have fewer than four feet." Pets provide meaningful social support for owners, and they can be especially beneficial for seniors. Ample research shows pet ownership delivers physical and mental health benefits for seniors, regardless of whether they're living on their own or in a senior living community.

However, many older Americans still mistakenly believe moving into a senior living community means they'll have to leave their pets behind. In fact, the fear they'll have to give up a beloved pet is among the top emotional reasons seniors don't want to move into senior living, according to author and senior real estate specialist Bruce Nemovitz. In an informal survey by Nemovitz, seniors ranked losing a pet as emotionally jarring as having to leave their familiar homes and possessions. "Senior living communities are all about supporting the physical health and mental well-being of residents. For many senior citizens, pets are an important part of their lives. It makes sense to preserve the bond between pet and senior

owner whenever possible.

Physical benefits

Pet ownership benefits senior citizens in multiple ways, research shows. Older people who own dogs are likely to spend 22 additional minutes walking at a moderately intense pace each day, according to a recent study by The University of Lincoln and Glasgow Caledonian University. Published in BioMed Central, the study also found dog owners took more than 2,700 more steps per day than non-owners. Multiple studies have also concluded that pet ownership can help lower blood pressure, contribute to improved cardiovascular health and reduce cholesterol.

Mental health

Interacting with pets also has many mental health benefits, especially for seniors. Spending time with pets can help relieve anxiety and increase brain levels of the feel-good neurochemicals serotonin and dopamine. Pets can help relieve depression and feelings of loneliness. The online journal Current Gerontology and Geriatrics Research reports multiple studies indicate dementia patients who interact with animals

become more social, are less agitated and have fewer behavioral issues.

Pets in senior living settings

For seniors looking for a community that will accept their pets, Cummings suggests a few questions to ask:

"For too long, some senior living communities didn't recognize the value of allowing residents to bring their pets with them," Cummings says. "That has definitely changed."

- What is your pet policy and what type of animal do you consider a pet? Generally, small dogs, cats, birds, rabbits, rats, hamsters, fish, turtles and other small companion animals qualify for pet policies. Seniors should check to be sure their pet meets the standards of the community.
- What is your pet health policy? Typically, senior living communities that accept small pets will want them to be current on all vaccinations and have regular exams by a licensed veterinarian. Pets will also need to have any required state- or county-issued licenses.
- What, if any, kind of training do you require pets to have? Requiring dogs to



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be house-trained and cats to be litter-trained is standard. Communities will also want to know your pet is well-behaved and not aggressive. They may ask you to have pets obedience trained.

- Do you offer any assistance with pet-related tasks? Most communities

will require residents be able to care for pets themselves, including feeding, walking, potty needs and health needs. "Moving into a senior living community is a big change, one that most residents find positive," Cummings says. "They gain freedom from home maintenance tasks and household

chores, a socially rewarding environment, and as-needed support for healthcare and daily care. As long as seniors are still able to care for their pets, there's no reason they shouldn't be allowed to bring their best friends with them to their new homes."

Do these 5 things for a stress-free summer adventure

(BPT) - The beloved summer season tends to come and go too fast, so there's no time to waste when planning a summer trip with friends or family. Whether it's a bike ride, hiking for

the day or a family vacation at the beach, you'll want to make sure you're prepared for the adventures that lie ahead. Check out these five essential on-the-go travel tips that will ensure a safe and stress-free trip.

you never know when duct tape and a little emergency cash can save the day.

Guard yourself against the sun

Nothing can ruin a fun time quite like sunburn can. Sun protection is something you don't want to leave behind and you certainly don't want to get a late start to your day because you have to run to the store to pick up another bottle of sunscreen. Make sure your summer adventure pack is full of sun gear: sunscreen, sunglasses, SPF clothing, and a baseball cap or a wide-brimmed hat.

Have cold water at the ready

It's important to stay hydrated in the summer heat, so don't forget to pack plenty of water. To keep your water ice-cold, fill your water bottles halfway with water and stick them in the freezer. Before you leave for your next outing, fill the bottle to the top and you have refreshing ice water to go! Or invest in a well-made reusable, insulated bottle that will keep your water cold throughout the day.

Tip: Freeze fresh fruit such as berries or lemons in ice cube trays and toss in your water bottle before you go for a refreshing unique twist!

Don't let empty batteries stop your fun

A few hours into your adventure you might find that your phone is running low on battery, making you choose between keeping your access to the outside world and a photo op. Invest in a portable power bank. Just keep it charged and ready in your pack so you can top off your battery meter whenever you're on the go.

Stay energized with protein-rich on-the-go snacks

It can be hard to eat healthy when you're on the go. Avoid fast-food places that tend to be heavy on the junk food and prepare a variety of nutritious snacks before you hit the road. "Choose foods that are high in protein and other nutrients like vitamin B12, which are essential for maintaining energy throughout the

day," says Registered Dietitian and Nutritionist Dawn Jackson Blatner. "Raw nuts, nut butters, fresh fruit and even eggs are easy to prep and won't make a mess while traveling."

Blatner recommends baking up a batch of egg muffins and freezing them until your next outing. "Not all eggs are created equal though," says Blatner. "With six times more vitamin D, more than double the omega-3s and vitamin B12 than ordinary eggs, Eggland's Best eggs are the only eggs I recommend to my clients and serve to my family since they are loaded with superior nutrients that can help you refuel after a long day of traveling or sightseeing."

Check out this easy and healthy recipe to get started.

Mini Quiches with Chives, Shallots and Turkey Bacon

INGREDIENTS

- 8 Eggland's Best Eggs (large)
- 12 oz. turkey bacon,

- chopped
- 1 small onion, minced
- 1 shallot, minced
- 1 teaspoon garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup fresh chives, minced (plus more for garnishing)
- Small handful of parsley, roughly chopped
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasonings
- Pinch of smoked paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2/3 cups fresh Parmesan cheese

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Lightly grease a mini muffin tin with cooking spray and place it on a cooking sheet. Doing this will make it easier to transport in and out of the oven.

In a large skillet, add in the turkey bacon and cook on medium-high heat. After a few minutes, add the onion, shallot and garlic and cook down for a few more minutes.

Lastly, add the chives, parsley and Italian seasoning and cook mixture until the turkey bacon is cooked

SEE ADVENTURE ON PAGE 6

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An estimated 795,000 people in the United States have a stroke each year.

5 facts about strokes that could save your life

(BPT) - Chances are you know someone who has had a stroke. An estimated 795,000 people in the United States have a stroke each year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Despite how common strokes are, there are a lot of widely believed misconceptions. Unfortunately, not knowing the facts can put a person at bigger risk for experiencing a stroke themselves, or, not being able to help someone else who may be experiencing a stroke. To help separate fact from fiction, the medical experts at Life Line Screening share the truth about the top misconceptions about stroke:

Misconception: Strokes only happen to older people. Fact: Research found 61 percent of strokes happen in people over the age of 65. That means 39 percent of strokes happen to younger people.

Misconception: Strokes are not a problem in the United States. Fact: You may only know a few people who've

had a stroke in their life, but someone has a stroke every 40 seconds in the U.S.

Misconception: A stroke will kill you. Fact: Approximately one out of eight strokes results in death within 30 days. The other seven instances leave the person disabled. Stroke is fatal in about 10 to 20 percent of cases and, among survivors, it can cause a host of disabilities, including loss of mobility, impaired speech, and cognitive problems.

Misconception: Strokes cannot be prevented. Fact: Up to 80 percent of strokes could be stopped before they start. Health screenings are an effective way to identify and understand risk factors so they can be properly managed. Research shows nine out of 10 cardiovascular doctors support preventive health screenings for cardiovascular disease (plaque in the arteries) among patients with key risk factors. To learn more, visit <http://www.lifelinescreening.com>.

Misconception: Only a doctor can identify a stroke. Fact: Everyone can and should know the signs and symptoms of stroke. By taking quick action, you could save a life. According to the CDC, the most common signs of stroke are:

- Sudden numbness or weakness in the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body.
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or difficulty understanding speech.
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or lack of coordination.
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause. If you or someone else has any of these symptoms, call 911 immediately. Understanding the facts about stroke helps empower you to control your own health. Even if risk factors are present, you can take proactive measures to help prevent stroke for yourself and loved ones.



The recommended a safe range of salt is between 3 and 5 grams of daily.

Understanding the link between salt and health

(BPT) - The news lately is full of articles about salt and health. Everyone seems to be getting either too much salt or not enough. So which is it? Part of the problem is with how we study the connection. Fortunately, researchers on both sides of the issue are starting to agree on how best to proceed and may soon have a better answer for all of us. That answer may be that for most of us, there is no need to eat less salt than we do now.

The European Heart Journal recently published a report by researchers from the World Heart Federation, the European Society of Hypertension and the European Public Health Association that clarified that eating more than 5 grams of sodium per day increases the risk of heart disease, but there was little evidence that eating less than 2 grams per day had any health benefits. They recommended a safe range of between 3 and 5 grams of daily sodium. The good news is that the average American eats about 3.4 grams of sodium

per day, an amount that has stayed the same for the last 50 years.

Of course more research is needed, but also better research. In the past, many studies only looked at the effect of salt on blood pressure. Today more doctors and scientists are looking at the effect salt has on your total health. The researchers agreed that your overall diet is more important to your health than a single nutrient. It's true that a low-salt diet can lower your blood pressure slightly, but it can also place stress on other parts of your body, and that can increase the risk of bad outcomes like diabetes.

Another way research into salt and health is being improved is in the way the results are collected. In the past, people whose salt levels were being studied provided only one urine sample, but your salt levels vary throughout the day and from day to day.

A much more accurate way to study salt in people is to collect multiple urine

samples over many days, not an easy task, but one that the researchers recognized produces much more accurate results. Fortunately, there is a captive group of people that scientists are studying to measure their salt intake exactly: Russian cosmonauts living in a closed environment as part of the "Mars" project. This research is already yielding some surprising results, such as more salt makes you less thirsty.

Everyone agrees that we need salt to live and that it is an essential nutrient, but getting the right amount is important. The fact is that a small percentage of people are salt sensitive and are affected by salt more than others. These individuals may benefit from less salt, but the rest of us may be put at risk from that same low-salt diet. Every person has different health needs and should follow the advice of their doctor. Placing the entire country on a low-salt diet, as some have suggested, may do more harm than good.

ADVENTURE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5
through.
Remove mixture from heat and set aside until

needed.
In a 4-cup liquid measuring cup, add in the eggs and take a fork to whisk until evenly beaten.
Add the paprika and salt and whisk to combine.

Place a thin layer of Parmesan cheese into each individual muffin tin.
Take one teaspoon of the bacon mixture and add it to each tin.
Carefully pour enough of the egg mixture into each muffin tin, just until it covers the filling mixture. Sprinkle with some more Parmesan cheese.
Bake quiches for 16-18 minutes or until the eggs have fully set.
Allow to cool slightly before taking a butter knife to release them from the pan.
Serve immediately or let quiches cool completely, cover with plastic wrap, and store in the fridge. To reheat, place them on a baking sheet in a 375-degree oven for 5-7 minutes, or until heated through.
Source: Eggland's Best



Bake up a batch of egg muffins and freeze them and they will be ready for your next outing.

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Senior Focus

A Guide to Healthy Living

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Looking for balance? Fighting fatigue? Your diet might be a place to start

(BPT) - Adults today are constantly searching for balance in life. While balance can be broadly defined, in simple terms it is rooted in equal proportions. The human body demands an equilibrium in order to sustain proper mental, physical and spiritual health. But, achieving balance can be difficult when everyday personal and environmental stresses (such as work, poor diet, harsh sunlight and pollution) expose the body to cell-damaging oxidative stress.

The obstacles to reaching balance are only growing due to shifting lifestyle choices. Today’s adults are active and trying to cram more into a 24-hour day than ever before. In fact, fatigue is a common issue for working adults.

Meanwhile, an increasing number of adults are not getting the nutrients they need to keep their bodies properly fueled to meet the demands faced in a single day. In fact, according to a survey from Instantly, more than 53 percent of Americans skip breakfast at least once a week, while 12 percent never have breakfast at all. The World Health Organization recommends eating at least 400 grams, or five servings, of fruits and vegetables per day, but approximately 75 percent of people worldwide fail to meet that minimum recommendation, creating significant nutrient gaps.

Let’s face it, it can be tough to eat a healthy and well-balanced meal morning, noon and night. For that

reason alone, supplements, which fill in nutrient gaps, can ensure you get the right quantities and varieties of nutrients your body needs. Supplements are becoming a critical part of the everyday routine for those looking to do it all and still ensure optimal nutrition. When you incorporate the adequate amounts of vitamins and minerals into your diet, particularly plant-based supplements that add phytonutrients, you can easily fill nutrient gaps and achieve optimal nutrition. By following a few easy steps, you can be on the path to achieving balance.

Educate yourself on your body’s needs

The first step in achieving nutritional balance is understanding the nutrients your body needs to function properly. Knowing what phytonutrients are, and the health benefits associated with them, is key. Phytonutrients are nutrients found in fruits, vegetables and other sources. They are associated with a variety of health benefits, such as eye, bone, joint and heart health, as well as supporting the immune system and brain health. Many phytonutrients are also powerful antioxidants that help fight cell-damaging free radicals.

Taking a multivitamin or multi-mineral supplement each day is a great way to fill in nutrient gaps. Amway’s Nutrilite Double X, for example, is a supplement that delivers a comprehensive and balanced range



The first step in achieving nutritional balance is understanding the nutrients your body needs to function properly.

of vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients to help your body’s natural antioxidant defense mechanisms fight cell-damaging free radicals and support whole body health. Nutrilite Double X contains 12 essential vitamins, 10 essential minerals and phytonutrients from 22 fruits, vegetables and herbs sourced from plants grown on Nutrilite-certified organic farms and Nutricert-certified supplier farms.

The vitamin B family is made up of eight B vitamins, each of which helps your

body form energy. Your body requires a regular supply of B vitamins in order to support energy-yielding metabolism. Most importantly, B vitamins need to be taken in the right amounts and at the right times. Amway’s Nutrilite Vitamin B Dual-Action supplement provides your body with an instant and extended release of B vitamins to create and sustain energy within the body. Knowing when to take vitamins and supplements and the right quantities you need is critical to achieving

optimal health.

“Amway’s Nutrilite Double X supplement is strategically designed to provide key vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients your body needs,” said Steve Missler, Principal Research Scientist at Amway. “Together with Vitamin B Dual-Action, these two products help provide the body with the quality nutrients needed to function properly and maintain a healthy balance. However, as with all nutrition plans, it is important to consult with a medical professional or

health expert to determine your specific nutritional needs.”

Achieve nutrient balance

When it comes to finding the right supplement, another tip is to look for third-party verifications of product quality. Nutrilite Double X and Vitamin B Dual-Action supplements are certified by NSF International, an independent, accredited organization that conducts rigorous tests to assure consumers that products contain what is stated on the label.

It is important to ensure that the supplement you choose is also gentle on your stomach. Starting your day with a healthy breakfast along with a supplemental source of phytonutrients and B vitamins can help ensure you get optimal nutrition throughout the day.

Achieving nutrient balance and fighting fatigue do not need to be uphill battles. Coffee and energy drinks can be effective for short-term needs, but are not the solution. There are many ways to proactively supplement your diet with the nutrients you need and to help fight fatigue before it begins. Supplements are an easy, safe and effective way to ensure you get enough vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients, while also ensuring you get the right B vitamins to help fight fatigue. Jump start your day with essential phytonutrients and B vitamins and help your body endure your active life.

Transportation safety: How seniors can maintain independence outside the home

(BPT) - It can be hard to admit your vision isn't what it used to be, especially when it comes to driving. Maybe you've noticed some difficulties reading traffic signals, or you've found it challenging to drive at night.

If you're a family member noticing these warning signs in a loved one, pointing out these challenges may seem like a daunting and delicate undertaking. But when it comes to being on the road, safety is one thing you can't ignore.

Encouraging your loved one to prioritize safety can be hard, especially when it feels like their independence is at stake. That's why it's important to have an open and honest discussion to determine the best options for maintaining independence outside the home.

Step 1: Address driver safety

Vision is the most important sense for driving safety. Annual vision screening is important for everyone, but it is especially critical for older people, since the sensory data used for driving is predominantly visual.

For seniors still able to drive, a defensive driving class can be beneficial. These classes allow students to brush up on skills while gaining con-

fidence and introduce them to alternative transportation options for the times and locations of their preference. What's more, many insurance companies provide discounts to seniors who complete these courses.

Giving up driving doesn't have to mean choosing between all or nothing. For example, start limiting driving to daylight only, non-rush-hour periods. Then look into supplementary transportation options that eliminate the need to drive while still allowing you to get where you need to go.

Step 2: Research transportation options

It's important to educate yourself or your loved one about locally available transportation options for seniors. When you know there are reliable, cost-effective transportation options available, it can help maintain a high level of independence for a trip to the grocery store or a doctor's appointment.

Rides in Sight is a nationwide, online database of senior transportation options built by ITNAmerica, a national non-profit organization dedicated to providing sustainable transportation options for seniors. Visit www.ridesinsight.org and enter basic information like your state or zip code, and you can find the ride option that's



Giving up the keys is easier if you do it over a period of time

best for your situation. If you prefer to access information by phone, call 1-855-60-RIDES (1-855-607-4337).

Rides in Sight makes it easy to find customized transportation, no matter what a person's needs. For example, you can find wheelchair accessible transportation options or

door-to-door driver assistance if that's what you need.

Step 3: Implement a trial period

Giving up the keys is easier if you do it over a period of time. Pick a date and schedule your first ride with a transportation service during a

time you normally drive. Any change takes time to adapt to, so try it out for a while before reassessing and making any necessary adjustments. After this trial period, you should feel more comfortable with someone else driving you, and you get to be in control of your mobility.

For older Americans, it's important to be able to maintain independence when they limit or stop driving. When they are encouraged to create

their own driving transition plan, more emphasis can be placed on finding new passions and activities to engage with their communities. The result is a positive impact on people of all ages.

To have that impact, reliable, secure transportation is essential. Having the necessary conversations and researching appropriate transportation options helps keep everyone happy, healthy and safe.

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5 eye health tips that are easy to visualize

(BPT) - Writer Leigh Hunt once said, “The groundwork of all happiness is good health.” It’s a mantra you heed because nothing is more important than your health. That’s why you watch what you eat, you exercise at least three times a week and you avoid tobacco or excessive alcohol use. You’re working hard to improve your body’s overall health, but there’s one integral part of your body that you have yet to focus your health regimen on - your eyes.

It’s easy to take your eyes for granted, but they remain one of your body’s most important organs and, like the rest of your body, they will benefit from your efforts to improve their health. To support your eyes and maintain a healthy lifestyle, incorporate these five tips today.

- Consult an eye care professional. Just as you visit your doctor for your yearly checkup, you should also visit your optometrist once a year to review your eye health. Your optometrist can answer any questions you have about your eyes, and the checkup can help identify eye concerns such as glaucoma, diabetic eye

disease and macular degeneration, which otherwise have no warning signs.

- Read smart. Whether it’s the morning paper, your favorite weekly magazine or a page-turning thriller, reading is one of your favorite hobbies, but sometimes the page can be hard to see. In cases like this, support your eyes with Foster Grant(R) reading glasses. Foster Grant(R) offers high-quality, non-prescription reading glasses in a wide range of strengths suited for your individual eyes. These glasses are prescription-quality lens magnification without the prescription price, and they are available in a wide array of styles, allowing you to support your style as well as your health. Remember, 50 is the new 40, and there’s no reason you can’t look great and see great all at the same time.

- Give your eyes some downtime. If you spend long periods of time looking at a computer screen during the day, be sure to give your eyes a rest by employing the 20-20-20 rule. Look 20 feet away for 20 seconds after every 20 minutes of screen



BPT

Just as you visit your doctor for your yearly checkup, you should also visit your optometrist once a year to review your eye health

time to help reduce digital eyestrain.

- Embrace digital glasses options. Another solution to help limit digital eye strain

caused from using tech devices is to add a pair of non-prescription digital eye glasses. Foster

Grant(R) Eyezen(TM) Glasses not only help relax your eyes but also enhance your viewing experience. Most people spend at least 12 hours a day consuming media, according to The Vision Council’s 2016 Digital Eye Strain Report, Eyes Over Exposed: The Digital Device Dilemma. The report also found that it only takes as little as two hours in front of a screen to cause digital eye strain, so start protecting your eyes today.

- An apple a day. A healthy balanced diet benefits not just your overall health but your eyes as well. Carrots have a reputation for supporting eye health, but the most beneficial vegetables are leafy greens like kale or spinach. Collard greens and fish varieties like salmon, halibut and tuna can also help support your eye health, so add them to your next meal.

You’ve already taken the initiative to live a healthier, happier life, so don’t forget to add your eye health as well. By instituting these simple changes, you’ll be feeling and seeing your best. To learn more about reading and Eyezen digital glasses options from Foster Grant(R), visit <http://fostergrant.com/>

4 surprising health benefits of cherries - this summer’s superfruit

(BPT) - Have you ever said no to a cherry? Probably not. This summertime treat is simply delicious. And if you’re looking for another reason to indulge, you’ll be pleased to know that cherries are surprisingly good for you. Recent research indicates that this summer’s superfruit offers a variety of health benefits, including the four outlined below.



Submitted photo

Studies show that cherries are a natural source of melatonin, and researchers who have studied the melatonin content of cherries recommend eating them an hour before bedtime to help stabilize your sleep cycle.

cans suffer from gout, a form of arthritis characterized by severe pain, redness and tenderness in the joints. This condition is commonly associated with elevated levels of uric acid in the blood. A study conducted by researchers at the University of California at Davis found that people who ate sweet cherries showed reduced levels of uric acid. In addition, research from the Boston University School of Medicine showed that people who ate cherries had a 35 to 75 percent lower chance of experiencing a gout attack.

Sleep support via melatonin

Everyone understands the value of a good night’s sleep, but sometimes your body simply doesn’t want to cooperate. When you find yourself wide awake and restless, your melatonin levels might be low. Melatonin is the chemical that controls your body’s internal clock to regulate sleep and promote overall healthy sleep patterns. Studies show that cherries are a natural source of melatonin, and researchers

who have studied the melatonin content of cherries recommend eating them an hour before bedtime to help stabilize your sleep cycle.

Fiber for weight loss

Many Americans struggle with weight issues, and poor diet is often identified as a major culprit. But although there is a great deal of discussion about what people shouldn’t be eating, there isn’t as much talk about what people should be eating, like fiber. Most Americans’ diets are fiber-deficient, falling short of the 25-35 grams per day recommended by the USDA Dietary Guidelines. These guidelines recommend two cups of fruit daily, and cherries are an easy and delicious way to meet that target.

Enjoy a bowl of superfruit today

In addition to all these health benefits, cherries also possess cancer-fighting properties, according to a study by the USDA’s Western Human Nutrition Research Center. So whether you’re looking to boost your

health or you enjoy the taste of this juicy treat - or both - there are plenty of reasons to reach for a bowl of cherries for your next snack or to add them to the menu at your next meal. Whatever your preference, be sure to get them quickly before cherry season is over.

To learn more about the health benefits of cherries, visit NWCherries.com.

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