

Tips for a Healthy Home

Staying Healthy with Pets



Pets are wonderful playmates! Also, studies show that they improve physical and mental well-being.

Keep reading to see how you can maximize the benefits of having another friend under your roof!



How often do you clean your pet's space?

Pet supplies and living spaces are the perfect growing place for bacteria that can get you and your pet sick.

- Keep pet food and supplies **away** from places where you eat and drink.
- Clean your pet's space and supplies often.
 - » Clean **outside the home** when possible. Or, use a **laundry sink** or **bath tub** and **disinfect** used areas.
- » Wash dog and cat food bowls **daily**.
- » Use **stainless steel dishware** when possible.
- » Avoid leaving food out overnight.



Does your pet go outside?

Chemicals in the environment can be tracked into your home by pets that spend time outside.

- **Clean off paws** before they re-enter your home.
 - » Use a paper towel or washcloth soaked in warm water.
- **Brush and bathe** them regularly. Ask your vet about how often to wash your pet.



Do you pick up your dog's feces(poop)?

Dog waste can be in the air we breathe and the water we drink. This can cause us to get sick and can harm the world around us.

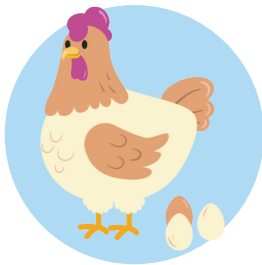
- Always pick up after your dog in your **yard** and in **public places**. Seal the bag and place it in the trash!



Do you enjoy playing with your pet?

Great! Pay attention to these tips to keep everyone safe.

- **Watch** young children when they are around pets to teach safe play.
- Always **wash your hands** after playing with your pet.
- Avoid **rough play** to prevent injury.



Do you have backyard chickens? Do you eat their eggs?

Chicken eggs may contain lead if the chickens live on contaminated soil. When eaten, the lead can threaten a child's healthy development.

- Consider testing your soil for lead to make sure your chicken eggs are safe to eat.

For information on soil testing, contact the University of Massachusetts at Amherst by calling (413) 545-2311.

To learn more about sources of lead exposure, visit <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/sources-of-lead-besides-lead-paint>



Does anyone at home have allergies or asthma?

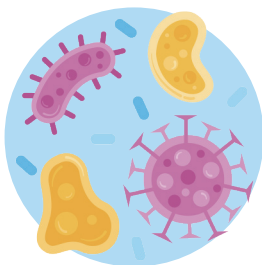
Particles in a **pet's fur**, **dead skin flakes (dander)**, **urine** and **feces** can trigger or worsen asthma and allergy symptoms.

- **Vacuum** carpets and furniture when the person is not around.
- **Reduce clutter** and **dust** frequently with a damp cloth.
- When possible, keep the pet:
 - » outside the bedroom
 - » off furniture
- **Bathe** your pet with special shampoo to reduce dander. Talk to your vet for further recommendations.
- Use air cleaners with a HEPA filter.

Visit these sites for more information:

pet allergies: <https://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/topics/agents/allergens/pets/>

asthma: <https://www.epa.gov/asthma/asthma-triggers-gain-control>



Is anyone at home at greater risk of sickness?

Pregnant women, children under 5 and adults age 65 or older are at greater risk of getting sick from animals.

- **Pregnant women** should avoid contact with cats and rats. They should avoid handling cat litter.
- Families with **young children** should avoid adopting pets such as **lizards, frogs, turtles** and **chickens**. They can spread salmonella and other germs.

For more information on how to keep your pets and your family healthy, visit [cdc.gov/healthypets](https://www.cdc.gov/healthypets)

