



## What is The Pet Effect?

Pets change people—this is something we all understand on an emotional level. But is it possible that having a pet could change your health in other ways? A growing body of research says “yes.”<sup>1</sup>

Studies show that pets can help lower blood pressure, lower risk of heart disease, prevent allergies in children, reduce stress levels, decrease anxiety and depression, strengthen immune systems, increase social interaction, and more.<sup>1</sup> Some call it the Human Animal Bond, but we call it *The Pet Effect*. Market research demonstrates that *The Pet Effect* phrase promotes better pet owner understanding of the emotional and physical health benefits that come from human-pet interactions.<sup>2</sup>

## What is a Veterinarian’s Role in The Pet Effect?

Pets are making people healthier. So it stands to reason that the professionals who keep animals healthy are contributing to the health of individuals, families and communities. These new discoveries help put veterinarians into the center of conversations about public health.

## Who is Behind The Pet Effect Campaign?

The Human Animal Bond Research Institute (HABRI) and Zoetis have teamed-up to raise public awareness of this important research. We believe that these facts can make positive changes in the way pets are perceived by their owners, policymakers and human health professionals. Significant time, resources and energy have already gone into understanding and promoting *The Pet Effect*. And this is just the beginning.

## How Can The Pet Effect Help My Practice?

**You Can Improve Perceptions of Your Practice:** Research shows that top performing practices (those with greater than 10% year-over-year growth) put more stock in improving the bond between pet owners and their pets than they do in improving that between the practice and the pet owner.<sup>3</sup> We’ve learned that pet owners would have a more favorable perception of their veterinarian if they displayed *The Pet Effect* materials in their practices.<sup>4</sup>

**You Can Improve the Perceived Value of Checkups:** As you know, pet owners often wait until something is wrong with their pet to visit your office. When pet owners understand that their pet’s health may be intrinsically linked to their own, it can encourage them to bring their pets into your office for important regular checkups.<sup>5</sup>

[Check out the campaign at ThePetEffect.org/vet](http://ThePetEffect.org/vet)



## Talking With Clients About The Pet Effect

*The Pet Effect* is easy to talk about—pet owners love hearing good news about their pets. To help you start those conversations, here are some suggestions. Of course, as a pet health professional, you'll know the best way to talk about *The Pet Effect* to your own clients.

### Talking Points

#### When a Client Asks You What *The Pet Effect* Is:

*The Pet Effect* is the positive effect that our dogs and cats have on our health. Every year, more research shows that having a pet can actually improve your physical and emotional health.<sup>1</sup>

#### Other Talking Points:

- Did you know that if you've ever owned a cat, you're relative risk of death by heart attack decreases 40%?<sup>2</sup>
- Did you know that having a cat or dog in the house can actually decrease childhood allergies?<sup>3</sup>
- 97% of people doctors believe that there are health benefits to owning a pet.<sup>4</sup>

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