



BRYN MAWR TERRACE

MAIN LINE SENIOR CARE ALLIANCE

A Healthy Tradition of Care and Wellness

Tips on Pet Therapy Benefits for Seniors

If you have an aging loved one who suffers from isolation, an animal companion could work wonders for their emotional and physical well-being. Even occasional interactions with animals in a long-term care setting can enhance residents' mood and behavior. Research shows that owning or interacting with a pet improves a senior's overall quality of life by providing physical, emotional and social benefits, including:

Physical Benefits

- **Heart Health** – Lowers blood pressure, cholesterol and risk of cardiovascular disease
- **Improved Activity** – Increases the frequency of physical activity and exercise.
- **Healthy Behavior** – Helps develop a routine; encourages owners to eat regularly or complete chores.

Social Benefits

- **Increased Interaction** – Adds more opportunities to socialize with neighbors.
- **Encourages Conversation** – Sparks many discussions, especially with fellow pet owners.
- **Involvement in Activities** – Makes seniors less likely to dwell on the past and more likely to pursue current activities, leading to social bonds and interaction.

Emotional Benefits

- **Decreased Loneliness** – Provides companionship; gives isolated seniors a source for affection, conversation and activity.
- **Stress Relief** – Increases levels of serotonin, the “feel good” hormone that relieves stress; provides physical contact, which helps to calm anxiety.
- **Better Self-Esteem** – Reminds discouraged seniors that they are still capable of being loved and needed.
- **Sense of Purpose** – Provides a reason to get up in the morning; combats depression symptoms by eliminating feelings of worthlessness; enhances seniors' mental health by making them feel loved and needed.

If you think your loved one could benefit from pet therapy through owning a pet, carefully consider your loved one's physical health and abilities, financial situation and lifestyle before bringing an animal home. Ask yourself these questions to help you make the best decision:

- What kind of pet would best suite my loved one?
- Can they take care of a pet now and in the future?
- Is my loved one an experienced owner?
- Does the pet have a good temperament?
- Could I adopt an older animal in need?

Even if your loved one can't own a pet due to their health or living situation, they can still benefit from pet therapy through pet visitations.



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Located near Bryn Mawr Hospital, **Bryn Mawr Terrace** – part of [Main Line Senior Care Alliance](#) – has provided exceptional care and services to seniors and their families since 1966. It's a tradition we're proud to continue.

Today, **Bryn Mawr Terrace** serves as a Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC), offering a range of services – including [short-term rehabilitation](#), [traditional nursing care](#), [independent living](#), [personal care](#), [memory care](#), [restorative care](#) and [respite care](#) – all in a setting that is warm, welcoming and nurturing. For more information on **Bryn Mawr Terrace** and our variety of needs-based lifestyle services, please call us at **(610) 525-8300** or [contact us](#) online.

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