

## The 'Pet-Health Effect' in Older Age

(Most resources are in the San Francisco Bay Area but look for similar programs in your area.)

### PET OWNERSHIP OR RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Muttville**: Senior dog adoption agency in San Francisco. They match senior canines with senior humans and also have a drop in cuddle club, for those who cannot or do not want to adopt.
- **Thulani**: Senior German Dog Rescue Agency.
- **San Francisco SPCA's Sido Pet Protection Program**: When pets outlive their guardians, cats and dogs enrolled in Sido are taken into the SF SPCA's Adoption Program. They receive exceptional care and attention while the SF SPCA works to place them in a loving home.

### STUDIES ABOUT THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF PET OWNERSHIP:

- **Pet ownership and Aging** (Jessica Bibbo)
- **Caregiving for an Aging Pet Owner** (Jessica Bibbo)
- **At Home, On Air, 'Pet Ownership is 'Medicine'.** Listen to the conversation with Jessica Bibbo from April 27, 2023.
- **'How pets contribute to healthy aging'**, National Poll On Aging Report

### AGENCIES THAT HELP DEFRAY THE COST OF PET OWNERSHIP:

- Pets are Wonderful Support : **PAWS**
- Paws as Loving Support: **PALS**

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## TIPS FOR MAKING A HOME PET-FRIENDLY:

- **Floors:**
  - Linoleum or Marmoleum: Environmentally-friendly flooring that comes in a wide variety of colors and is either sold in rolls (sheet flooring) or tiles.
  - Wood or cork flooring with high-strength traffic coating.
  - Luxury Vinyl Flooring (LVT): Often comes in [wood patterns](#).
- **Hand showers:** If you decide to bathe your pet at home, you need a handshower. You can replace a wall-mounted shower head with a hand shower mounted on a bar. This is relatively easy since plumbing connections are standardized. One of my favorite hand showers is this one with a hand hold by [Moen](#).
- **Stairs:** Safe indoor and outdoor stairs are especially important with a dog, who can divert your attention or pull on the leash. Note that stairs are also a challenge for many larger senior dogs.
- **Housekeeping:** Your furry friends shed hair and may have an occasional accident. Make sure that you take this into account not only in terms of flooring materials but also your cleaning protocol and tools (such as handheld [vacuum cleaners](#)).
- **Food Area:** Elevated food bowls may be more comfortable for you and your animal companion and also reduce trip hazards. They come in many styles, sizes and prices.

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