



## We Love Pets at Onco360!

Pets bring love, companionship, and joy into our lives, and as part of our family, there are resources available to support both you and your furry friends through every step of your treatment journey.

### Can I Keep My Pet During Treatment?

Yes! It is safe to own a pet while undergoing cancer treatment if you take proper precautions. Your healthcare team and your vet are great resources. Discuss any concerns such as:

- Will I experience side effects that may affect my ability to care for my pet?
- Will I need to be away from home for extended periods for treatment?
- Should I be concerned about my immunity when interacting with my pet?
- Could my treatments impact my pet's health?

### Are There Any Precautions to Keep in Mind?

While your pet can be a great source of comfort, a few daily changes can help keep both of you safe:

- Keep cancer treatment medications out of reach of pets and call your vet immediately if ingested.
- Prevent scratches by keeping your pet's nails trimmed, which could lead to infections.
- Keep your pet up to date on vaccinations and preventative medications by consulting your veterinarian.
- Talk to your doctor to make sure it's safe to clean a litter box, and wear gloves and a mask if possible.
- Keep the toilet lid closed to prevent your pet from drinking water that may be contaminated with treatment residue.
- Supervise your pet outdoors to prevent exposure to stray or sick animals.

### What are the Benefits of a Pet During Cancer Treatment?

Caring for a pet is not just a responsibility, it's also incredibly rewarding.

- The companionship of a pet can provide comfort, reduce feelings of isolation, and create a sense of stability.
- Research shows that pets can reduce stress by up to 71%<sup>1</sup>, which is essential for patients to lower stress levels and contribute to better immune function and reduced blood pressure.
- Taking your pet for a walk provides both physical benefits and a mental boost. Fresh air and movement help you and give your pet a way to channel their energy.

### How Do I Plan for My Pet's Care?

Cancer treatment may require temporary adjustments to how you care for your pet. If you need help, consider these options:

- Identify a trusted friend, neighbor, or family member who can help with pet care when needed.
- Utilize local pet sitting or boarding services if you need to be away for treatment.
- Research pet food banks or low-cost veterinary care services to ensure your pet's needs are met.
- If an extended absence is necessary, look into temporary fostering programs or pet assistance organizations



If you or a loved one need assistance, visit *CancerCare's* PAW Program to learn more about available resources.

<sup>1</sup>National Pet Day. Vetster. Accessed 3/25 <https://vetster.com/en-us/national-pet-day-off#:~:text=National%20Pet%20Day%20%2D%20April%2011%2C%202025%20%2D%20Vetster&text=National%20Pet%20Day%20takes%20place,pets%20bring%20into%20our%20lives!>