



PRESS RELEASE

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – April 26, 2019

Celebrate National Pet Week!

By the Vermont Veterinary Medical Association
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The first week of May is National Pet Week. It is dedicated to the over 200 million pets that bring joy to our lives. Vermont is one of states with the highest percentage of households owning pets—about 70 percent of Vermonters have at least one pet. Created in 1981 by the American Veterinary Medical Association and the Auxiliary AVMA, National Pet Week is a time to honor the many roles pets have in our lives and to promote responsible pet ownership. Whether your pet is a horse, bird, cat, dog, rodent, or any other of the amazing creatures in our world, our pets are there for us and don't ask much in return. During National Pet Week, we encourage pet owners to celebrate the bond and provide their pets with all that they need for a healthy and enriched life every week of the year. Each day has a specific theme associated with it:

- May 6: Choose well. Commit for life.
- May 7: Socialize now. New doesn't have to be scary.
- May 8: Exercise body. Exercise mind.
- May 9: Love your pet? See your vet!
- May 10: Maximize the human-animal bond.
- May 11: Emergencies happen. Be prepared.
- May 12: Plan for their care. Give them a lifetime of love.

Keeping your pet healthy involves providing good medical care, enriching their lives, and providing proper food and housing. Enrichment in pets is very important and allows them to keep their minds active. You can do this by taking your pet on walks, playing with them with different toys, and even building your cat a catio. Owners of birds and exotic pets can research ways to modify their pets' living space to provide variety and entertainment. This doesn't have to be buying expensive toys - appropriate homemade toys are just as good.

Nutrition and medical care are an important part of responsible pet ownership. One aspect that many pet owners should consider before adopting a pet of any type is the ability to afford veterinary care to prevent parasites and disease and treat any that may occur in the

pet. Annual physical exams and preventative medications are not without cost and are critical to pets' wellbeing. Before you get a new pet or if you have one and aren't sure what its needs are, talk to your veterinarian. They can provide you with accurate information to help you keep your pet healthy and happy. So, whether your pet is a horse or a gerbil or any size animal in between, take time during National Pet week to celebrate the bond! Take your dog for a walk, brush out your horse and go for a ride, play with the cat, or make some additions to your caged pets' environment to challenge their minds! They give us so much love and comfort: let's make sure we provide what they need this week and every day of the year. For more information, go to www.petweek.org.

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The Vermont Veterinary Medical Association (VVMA), founded in 1898, is a professional organization of 380 veterinarians dedicated to compassionate animal care and quality medicine.