

## Managing Health Issues Related to Your Pet

Before you consider giving up your pet because of health concerns it may have caused a family member, learn more about the conditions to determine if they are cause for concern or if there are ways to manage symptoms while still keeping your pet in the home.

### **Pet allergies:**

If someone in your home has been diagnosed with allergies by an allergist, carefully consider if you can live with or manage the symptoms. Children may outgrow pet allergies while others are able to manage their symptoms and keep their pet in their home. The following have proven effective in managing pet allergies:

Minimize contact with the animal and create an area free of pets, such as the bedroom.

Vacuum and clean floors, walls, ceilings, and furniture on a weekly basis.

Place a high efficiency particulate air purifier (HEPA) in the home, in addition to filters on vents.

Get the help of non-allergy suffering family members to clean the litterbox and pick up after the pet.

Frequently wash clothing and bedding materials, including the pet's bed.

Frequently bathe and groom the family pet.

Consider removing dander attracting materials such as upholstered furniture and draperies; replace wall-to-wall carpeting with wood, tile, linoleum, or vinyl flooring that won't harbor hair and allergen causing molecules.

Additional treatments for pet allergies include: immunotherapy (allergy injections), steroidal and antihistamine nose sprays or medication, or a combination of both approaches.

Consult with your physician and/or allergist to determine the best course of action for your family to live happily with your family pet.

*Source: Animal Humane Society of Minneapolis*

### **Toxoplasmosis**

Many expectant mothers question if they should give up the family cat due to concerns about toxoplasmosis. Because it's difficult for cats to transmit toxoplasmosis to humans, a pregnant woman is generally unlikely to contract the disease from her pet cat. For more information, please review the following:

Pregnancy and toxoplasmosis (Humane Society of the United States)

Defining toxoplasmosis, its symptoms and causes (Mayo Clinic)

In the event these alternative resources don't address the circumstances you are experiencing with your pet, please review how to surrender your pet to Animal Care and Enforcement.