

***Ask the Vet:* Pet Resolutions for Healthy Solutions**

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'Twas the end of the year and your Resolutions made.
You've thought long and hard, your plans are all laid.
But what of your pets? They need your help too!
They'd love to stay healthy this New Year with you.
If you're resolved to get fit, dust off those old shoes,
Grab a leash and a dog, shake those wintertime blues.
Walking builds muscles and can be engaging;
The exercise time with pets fends off old aging.
Those with a partner for workouts and fitness
Are likely to stick with it, studies bear witness.
If dieting is part of the health plan for you,
Let's make sure your pet's on the correct diet too.
Ask your vet about choices, and they should suggest
That a balanced, fixed formula diet is best.
And speaking of diets let's talk about teeth
And the nasty bacteria that lurk underneath.
Imagine not brushing your teeth for 10 years!
It's not just bad breath but a host of health fears.
That oral bacteria can spread from the mouth;
Without proper dental care, things can head south.
Disease of the teeth is where it does start,
Then airways and joints, also kidneys and heart.
Should you Resolve to do more for your pet,
Then brushing teeth often will decrease the threat.
"Prevention is key", is what vets preach each day,
To minimize risks that take 'healthy' away.
That's why we talk about tests for your friends,
Like blood work, to catch any unhealthy trends.
And physical exams are so very essential
To identify those things with illness potential.

Other health risks are too many to name,
But second hand smoke is sometimes to blame.
And parasites (ew, yuck!) both outside and in,
Cause GI tract, Heartworm, and diseases of skin.
But let's not forget that the biggest of all
Is allowing your pet to develop 'waist sprawl'.
Obesity's the cause of more problems, it's true:
Arthritis, diabetes, high blood pressure too.
A shorter lived life, and more cancer is seen;
They may be prevented by keeping pets lean.
Our animal companions put their trust in us,
And their New Year Resolutions, they want to discuss.
With effort consistent and determined by you,
We all can grow healthier. You know that it's true!
So let's all resolve to now choose what is right.
Healthy New Year to all! May your futures be bright!

