



## Healthy4life.ca Therapy Pets - January 2018

Holistic nutrition includes body, mind and spirit. Articles will address each area.

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**Hello, Friends!**

### **The Healing Power of Pets**

I love my pets and it gives me great joy to experience them interacting with others, especially shut ins. They are also good with young people with special needs including ADHD. The younger they were when I started their training the easier it was. I have found them to be very intelligent. Many other animals make good therapy pets, however, I will just mention 3 in this article.

#### **Dogs**

Therapy dogs are comforting and can lift people's spirits and calm anxiety.

[Canine Kennel Club Good Neighbour Program](#)

[Can Your Dog Be A Therapy Dog](#)

#### **Cats**

My cats became therapy cats after very positive experiences with eldercare. They began by getting used to wearing a harness, then leash walking, riding in the car and learning some basic commands. Click on the link to Therapeutic Paws of Canada link below for a list of commands that they are expected to know and experiences they are required to deal with.

Most long term care or assisted living facilities require you to bring in the cat's vaccination records once a year. The staff usually booked my kitties for 15 minute visits with residents and we usually spent 1 or 2 hours each trip as it was an hour away from home. It was very rewarding for me and the cats seemed

happy.

## Horses

Therapeutic horseback riding uses a therapeutic team, usually including a certified therapeutic riding instructor, two or more volunteers, and a horse, to help an individual ride a horse and work with it on the ground.

"Equine-Assisted Activities and Therapies". Research Autism. 16 November 2015.

"Therapeutic riding is used by disabled individuals who ride horses to relax, and to develop muscle tone, coordination, confidence, and well-being."

Jonas (2005). "Mosby's Dictionary of Complementary and Alternative Medicine. S.v. "therapeutic riding."". TheFreeDictionary.com. Elsevier, Inc. Retrieved January 15, 2016.

## Smokey the Therapy Cat

September 2012 - January 1, 2018

I have immense gratitude for all the joy he brought to our family, friends, shut ins and all those he visited in assisted living facilities. I have so many fond memories. Ah, I was just shy in this pic.



Comedian not a cat. Keeping an eye on Fluffy. Just having some yummy fibre a la cardboard even though my human does not like me ripping the boxes apart.

Perhaps your pet has a vocation as a therapy pet. Check it out online at Therapeutic Paws of Canada. It is a volunteer pet therapy, dog and cat visitation program.

[Therapeutic Paws of Canada](#)

**Be healthy 4 life,  
Cathy Ferren RHN**

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