

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT VETERINARY MEDICINE

**What is “Veterinary Medicine?”** Veterinary medicine is the medical treatment of animals – basically, veterinarians are doctors for animals.

**Why do people become veterinarians?** They love animals. They also like solving problems and finding out how to fix problems. They like science and math and want to help people and animals stay healthy. They like working with animals and people.

**What was the first animal to become a pet?** It was the dog, about 15,000 years ago

**What types of pets do people own?** Cats, dogs, birds, and fish are the most common pets, but amphibians (frogs and toads), ferrets, horses, rabbits, reptiles (snakes and turtles) and rodents (hamsters and guinea pigs) are also kept as pets.

**What do pets need?** Pets need food, water, shelter, toys, exercise/play, friends, a place to go to the bathroom, grooming (brushing, taking baths, clipping nails, brushing teeth), training and medical care. But, most of all, they need our time, attention, and love.

**Do more people own dogs or cats as pets?** There are more pet cats in the U.S. than pet dogs – almost 10 million more!

**Why do people own pets?** Pets give people company and make them happy. Animals are a part of life and form special bonds with people. Pets also teach people responsibility and how to be caring toward another living thing.

**How do animals keep warm?** Animals don't wear clothes, so most of them have hair or fur to keep them warm. Animals that do not have fur have other ways to keep themselves warm, such as living in warmer areas or spending a lot of time in sunlight.

**What do veterinarians do?**

- 1) Veterinarians keep all animals healthy. They take care of our pets, animals on the farm, animals in the zoo, and animals everywhere.
- 2) Some veterinarians are teachers.
- 3) Some veterinarians take care of food animals, like cows, to make sure our milk, meat and other foods are safe to eat and drink.
- 4) Some veterinarians work to prevent and cure diseases for people and animals
- 5) Some veterinarians work in the military, protecting the health of people and animals in other countries.
- 6) Some veterinarians develop new tests, drugs or treatments that save lives.

**What's the best thing about being a veterinarian?** Helping animals stay healthy. It's a great feeling knowing you've helped a pet live longer so it can have a longer, happier life with its family, or knowing that you're making the world safer for animals and people.

**Will there always be a need for veterinarians?** Yes, as long as there are people and animals on Earth.

**How can I become a veterinarian?** Well, you've got to finish school first – and that includes elementary school, too! You need to finish all the way through high school, then go to college, and then go to vet school. It seems like a long time, but it's worth it. Study hard in science and math, because you'll need to be good at them to be a veterinarian. Learn how to read, write, and talk to people. When you're old enough, join a club like 4-H or FFA to learn more about animal care. When you get older, you can work with animals at an animal shelter or veterinary hospital. If you have pets, go with your parents when they take your pets to the veterinary clinic, and ask your veterinarian questions and talk to them about their job.

**How much school does it take to become a veterinarian?** After high school, you need to go to college for about 4 years. Veterinary school is another 4 years after that.

**Ask your veterinarian or contact the American Veterinary Medical Association with any other questions:**

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