

LIFE / PETS / DOGS

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What we look for in Therapy Cats

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Elizabeth - follow her journey to therapy cat

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It may appear that evaluating a cat is very different from a dog. But the Pet Partners therapy cat evaluation requires much of the same skill set as for small [dogs](#).

Pet Partners evaluates, registers and insures nine species. Each species has its own test to pass based and the Evaluator has to be experienced with that species to conduct the test. The cat test requires that the animal be comfortable walking on a harness and leash and smoothly go into and exit a carrier without any stress or fuss. The cat must be comfortable being passed from lap and lap and handled by people he has just met without protesting, hissing, crawling up or scratching.

The cat must remain calm and quiet when the door opens and a "neutral dog" enters the test space.

The cat must be comfortable greeting new people, including men, and never appear bored or disinterested or anxious to flee.

The cat must not only tolerate being restrained and held very close, but enjoy it.

If the cat is small enough (under fifteen pounds) it can be carried for the test and has to be comfortable being lowered to people's laps or their height in a bed or chair.

The cat must never hiss or extend its claws or cling to someone.

The cat must not only enjoy being touched all over but crave the human touch.

It is very difficult to find appropriate [therapy cats](#). Many people think they have a friendly cat but put that animal in new surroundings with strange sounds and unfamiliar people and they can easily want to flee or freeze up, scratch or hide.

The local Pet Partner affiliate in Las Vegas, [Love Dog Adventures](#), is on their way to adding another therapy cat to its roster, Elizabeth. We will follow her journey from family pet to hard working therapy cat.

For more information about the Love Dog therapy program visit www.lovedogadventures.org and to learn about Pet Partners, click on www.petpartners.org.