

# Six Health Benefits of Raising Chickens

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Raising chickens has almost an infinite number of benefits. These benefits range from simple companionship to self-sufficient food production.

Raising and keeping chickens even has several health benefits that can positively impact those with mental or physical disabilities. In fact, several universities such as the [University of Minnesota](#) are utilizing therapy chickens during exam weeks to help reduce stress among students.

Here are six health benefits of raising chickens, especially for those with disabilities.

## **They Reduce Anxiety and Depression**

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Chickens are known to be very social critters who enjoy interacting with humans. One benefit of raising chickens is that they can be wonderful companions and help reduce anxiety and depression.

Studies show that chickens are very empathetic. They can detect different emotions, such as grief, and respond accordingly. Chickens are therefore great companions whose presence can help those prone to anxiety feel calmer and more at peace.

## **They Encourage Verbal Communication**

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Chickens are very vocal creatures. According to [Chickens and More](#), they are capable of over 20 different vocalizations, each with its own meaning. Another health benefit of raising chickens, especially for those who are disabled, is that they help encourage verbal

communication.

Some mental and physical disabilities can make verbal communication difficult. Because chickens chatter very frequently—sometimes even appearing to respond to humans—they can help increase confidence in verbal communication skills. They can also help owners practice appropriate responses to such vocalizations, like when it comes to feeding and warning about predators.

## **They Encourage Routine and Responsibility**

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For those with a mental or physical disability, establishing a routine to follow can be very important in finding regularity in day-to-day life. While chickens don't necessarily require the same amount of daily care as other pets, they still help encourage routine and responsibility in owners.

Chickens have daily care requirements including feeding, cleaning the coop, gathering eggs, and human interaction. These daily requirements give people a reason to get out of bed and do something good for their pets. They can also encourage responsibility in owners, which may help those with self-managed diseases and disabilities stay on top of their medications and treatments.

## **They Provide Laughter**

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Those who have any experience with chickens know just how funny they can be. Not only are chickens entertaining, but the laughter they encourage can actually be beneficial to one's health.

According to [Stanford University](#), laughter has numerous health benefits. These benefits include lower stress levels, lower inflammation, and higher levels of good cholesterol. With their funny antics, chickens are a constant source of healthy laughter and entertainment.

## **They Lessen Loneliness**

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Sometimes, mental and physical disabilities can cause those suffering from them to feel alienated from others and quite lonely. Another health benefit of raising chickens is that they can greatly lessen such loneliness.

According to [Michigan State University](#), when chickens were brought into nursing homes, they helped lessen feelings of loneliness in residents. Residents who interacted with the chickens were more likely to experience joy, to smile, and to have a more positive outlook on life. Raising chickens helps reduce feelings of loneliness by giving owners the sense of being needed and a greater sense of purpose.

## **They Trigger Fewer Allergies**

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Oftentimes, pet allergies can deter those with disabilities from getting a traditional support animal such as a dog or a cat. One benefit of raising chickens is that they will not trigger these traditional pet allergies.

Because chickens are traditionally kept outside, they can serve as wonderful support animals without the inconvenience and stress of allergies. Some breeds can even be kept inside the house without triggering allergies for many people.

## **Summary**

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Although chickens are non traditional pets, they are not to be overlooked. Raising chickens can positively impact health by reducing anxiety and depression, encouraging verbal communication, establishing routine, and serving as a source of healthy laughter. Because of their health benefits, chickens can be a great addition to the lives of individuals who are less able.