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## **One in Five respondents to AAA/Kurgo survey admit to driving with dog in their lap**

Millions of Americans recognize that dogs are wonderful companions and bring their favorite furry friend along on road trips, day trips and even day-to-day errands. However, in a vehicle this can mean added distractions for the driver. A recent survey conducted by AAA and Kurgo asked dog owners how often they drive with their dog and about their habits behind the wheel. The survey found that drivers not only love to bring Fido along, but they also often engage in risky behaviors when man's best friend is along for the ride.

Drivers distracted by dogs, many don't realize it

Thirty-one percent of respondents admit to being distracted by their dog while driving, however 59 percent have participated in at least one distracting behavior while driving with their dog. More than half (55 percent) have pet their dog while driving, and one in five allowed their dog to sit in their lap (21 percent). Other distracting behaviors drivers admitted to include giving food and water to their dog (seven percent) and playing with their dog (five percent). These behaviors can distract the driver and increase the risk of a crash. The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety found that looking away from the road for only two seconds doubles your risk of being in a crash.

Unrestrained dogs dangerous to driver, passenger and man's best friend

An overwhelming 80 percent of respondents stated that they have driven with their pets on a variety of car trips including day trips, local errands and leisure trips, the pet store, dog parks and to work. However only 17 percent use any form of pet restraint system when driving with their dog. Use of a pet restraint system, such as those available from Kurgo, can aid in limiting distractions and help protect your pet.

"Restraining your pet when driving can not only help protect your pet, but you and other passengers in your vehicle as well," cautioned Jennifer Huebner, AAA National, Traffic Safety Programs manager "An unrestrained 10-pound dog in a crash at 50 mph will exert roughly 500 pounds of pressure, while an unrestrained 80-pound dog in a crash at only 30 mph will exert 2,400 pounds of pressure. Imagine the devastation that can cause to your pet and anyone in the vehicle in its path."

Survey Methodology

The online study was conducted among a sample of 1,000 dog owners who have driven with their dog in past 12 months. The study results have an average statistical error of +/- 3.1 percent at the 95 confidence level.