



HOWARD GITTELMAN, DVM, MS
LISA SCHENKEL, DVM, CCRT
FIAMMA GOMEZ DE WITTE, DVM, DACVIM

22 NEW HEMPSTEAD ROAD * NEW CITY, NEW YORK 10956 * 845.638.3600
FAX 845.638.2054 E-MAIL CONTACT@ANIMALMEDICALNC.COM

NUTRITION GUIDELINES FOR PUPPIES AND DOGS

DOGS ARE AS INDIVIDUAL AS PEOPLE. LARGE, SMALL, YOUNG OR OLD, THEY ALL NEED A WELL-BALANCED DIET FOR GOOD HEALTH. GOOD NUTRITION IS NO ACCIDENT; DOGS OF DIFFERENT AGES AND SIZES HAVE DIFFERENT NUTRITIONAL NEEDS. IT THEREFORE TAKES TIME AND PATIENCE TO LEARN WHAT YOUR DOG NEEDS TO STAY HAPPY AND HEALTHY, AS WELL AS DILIGENCE AND PERSEVERANCE TO MAKE SURE YOUR DOG EATS WHAT HE/SHE SHOULD, RATHER THAN WHAT HE/SHE WANTS. USE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION TO HELP ENSURE THAT YOUR DOG GETS THE PROPER NUTRITION.

HOW DO I CHOOSE WHICH FOOD TO FEED?

THERE ARE THREE FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN DECIDING WHICH FOOD IS RIGHT FOR YOUR PET: LIFE STAGE, LIFESTYLE, AND OVERALL CONDITION. LIFE STAGE REFERS TO WHETHER YOUR DOG IS A PUPPY (BIRTH-1 YR), ADULT (1 YR-6 YRS), OR SENIOR (7 YRS AND OLDER). LIFESTYLE REFERS TO HOW ACTIVE OR INACTIVE YOUR DOG IS NORMALLY. OVERALL CONDITION REFERS TO YOUR DOG'S OVERALL HEALTH AND BODY WEIGHT. IN ADDITION TO THESE FACTORS, THE FOOD MUST ALSO MEET ESTABLISHED NUTRITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR DOGS.

THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN FEED CONTROL OFFICIALS (AAFCO) IS AN ORGANIZATION THAT PUBLISHES REGULATIONS FOR NUTRITIONAL ADEQUACY OF "COMPLETE AND BALANCED" DOG AND CAT FOODS. MOST DOG FOODS ON THE MARKET HAVE A LABEL CLAIM OF MEETING THE MINIMUM AAFCO REQUIREMENTS FOR DOG NUTRITION. THE HIGHER QUALITY DOG FOOD COMPANIES MEET THE REQUIREMENTS *AND* PERFORM CLINICAL TRIALS TO ENSURE THAT DOGS EATING THEIR BRAND OF DOG FOOD REMAIN HAPPY AND HEALTHY.

IS A PREMIUM DOG FOOD REALLY WORTH THE COST?

LOW COST DOG FOOD MAY BE LESS EXPENSIVE BUT IT IS NOT ALWAYS A BARGAIN. LOWER QUALITY FOODS MAY NOT PROVIDE OPTIMUM NUTRITION FOR YOUR DOG. HIGH QUALITY DOG FOODS PROVIDE 100% COMPLETE AND BALANCED NUTRITION WITH CONSISTENT HIGH QUALITY INGREDIENTS; I.E. FROM BAG TO BAG OR CAN TO CAN, YOUR DOG WILL GET CONSISTENT OPTIMAL NUTRITION. IN ADDITION, THESE DOG FOODS HAVE A HIGHER NUTRIENT AND ENERGY DENSITY THAN THE LOWER QUALITY FOODS WHICH TRANSLATES INTO SMALLER FEEDING PORTIONS. THEREFORE, THE PREMIUM DOG FOOD GIVES YOU THE BEST VALUE WHILE PROVIDING YOUR DOG WITH HIGH QUALITY NUTRITION.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD I FEED MY DOG?

PUPPIES FROM WEANING (GENERALLY 6 WEEKS OF AGE) TO 4 MONTHS OF AGE SHOULD BE FED THREE TIMES DAILY; I.E. YOU FEED 1/3 OF THEIR TOTAL DAILY REQUIREMENT AT EACH FEEDING. AFTER 4 MONTHS OF AGE, THEY SHOULD BE FED TWICE DAILY. MOST DOGS SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE FED TWICE DAILY THROUGHOUT THEIR LIFETIME (ALTHOUGH SOME DOGS WILL DO WELL ON ONLY ONCE DAILY FEEDING). DOGS LIKE ROUTINE, SO ESTABLISH A FEEDING SCHEDULE AND STICK TO IT. A GOOD TIME TO FEED YOUR DOG IS DURING FAMILY MEALS – THIS WILL OCCUPY HIM/HER WHILE THE REST OF THE FAMILY IS EATING.

HOW MUCH SHOULD I FEED MY DOG?

THE AMOUNT YOUR DOG NEEDS TO EAT DEPENDS ON MANY FACTORS INCLUDING LIFE STAGE, LIFESTYLE, AND OVERALL CONDITION (AS DISCUSSED PREVIOUSLY). MOST DOG FOODS WILL HAVE FEEDING GUIDELINES BASED ON WEIGHT PROVIDED ON THE PACKAGE. HOWEVER, JUST AS IN PEOPLE, EVERY DOG IS UNIQUE AND YOU HAVE TO ADJUST THE AMOUNT HE/SHE IS EATING ACCORDINGLY. BODY CONDITION SCORE (BCS) IS A SCALE THAT IS USED TO ASSESS YOUR DOG'S OVERALL BODY CONDITION. THIS INFORMATION CAN BE USED TO MAKE THE APPROPRIATE ADJUSTMENTS IN THE AMOUNT YOU ARE FEEDING YOUR DOG SO THAT HE/SHE MAINTAINS AN IDEAL BODY CONDITION.

PUPPIES:

JUST WEANED – 3 1/2-4 MONTHS OLD:

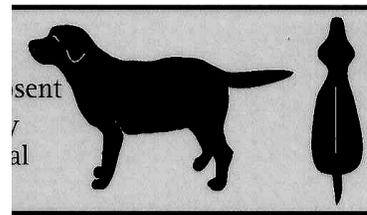
- FEED 1 8OZ CUP/5-10 LBS OF BODY WEIGHT/DAY.
- BCS 3
- FEED HIGH QUALITY PUPPY FOOD BASED ON SIZE.

4-6 MONTHS OLD:

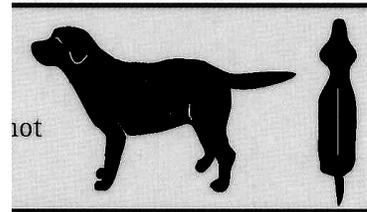
- FEED 1 8OZ CUP/ 10 LBS OF BODY WEIGHT/DAY.
- BCS 2 (LONG, LEAN, THIN)
- CONTINUE PUPPY FOOD AS ABOVE.

6 MONTHS – ADULTHOOD:

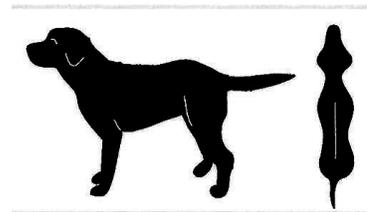
- CONTINUE FEEDING TO A BCS 2 UNTIL YOUR IS FULLY GROWN.
- SMALL AND MEDIUM BREEDS GENERALLY MATURE AT 8-12 MONTHS OF AGE.
- LARGE BREED DOGS GENERALLY MATURE AT 12-24 MONTHS OF AGE.



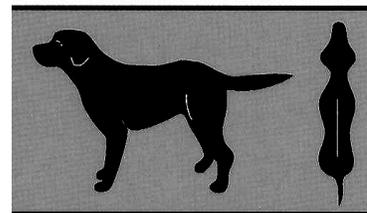
5 – obese
ribs have heavy fat covering; waist not visible



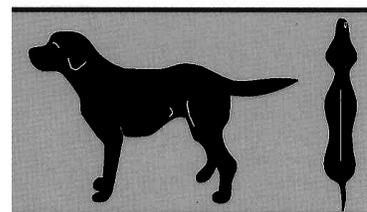
4 – overweight
ribs have moderate fat covering; waist visible from above but not prominent



3 – ideal
easily feel ribs but not visible; waist visible from above; abdominal tuck visible from the side



2 – underweight
minimal fat covering ribs; waist prominent from above and tuck prominent from the side



WHEN TO SWITCH TO ADULT FOOD:

- ONCE YOUR PUPPY IS FULLY GROWN, EVALUATE YOUR PUPPY'S NUTRITIONAL NEEDS, AND CHOOSE THE APPROPRIATE ADULT FORMULA.
- MAKE THE SWITCH GRADUALLY OVER 3-4 DAYS; I.E. ON DAY 1 FEED 1/4 NEW FOOD, 3/4 OLD FOOD, DAY 2 FEED 1/2 NEW FOOD, 1/2 OLD FOOD, AND SO ON, UNTIL YOUR PUPPY IS COMPLETELY ON THE NEW FOOD.
- LARGE BREED DOGS HAVE SPECIAL NEEDS DUE TO THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN OVERFEEDING AND DEVELOPMENTAL JOINT PROBLEMS:

FEED 'LARGE BREED' FORMULA FOODS — THEY CONTAIN REDUCED AMOUNTS OF CALCIUM, PHOSPHORUS, AND FAT. THIS HELPS CONTROL THEIR RATE OF GROWTH AND THUS, PROMOTE NORMAL DEVELOPMENT.

DEPENDING ON THE BREED, START SWITCHING TO ADULT FORMULA DOG FOOD AT 4-6 MONTHS OF AGE.

ADULT DOGS (2-6 YRS OF AGE):

- BASED ON YOUR DOG'S NUTRITIONAL NEEDS, FEED THE APPROPRIATE HIGH QUALITY ADULT FORMULA DOG FOOD.
- FEED TO MAINTAIN BCS OF 3.
- GENERALLY, MOST NORMAL HEALTHY DOGS NEED APPROXIMATELY 1 8OZ CUP/25-30 LBS OF BODY WEIGHT/DAY.
- REMEMBER THAT EACH DOG IS UNIQUE AND YOU MAY HAVE TO ADJUST THE AMOUNT OF FOOD YOU ARE FEEDING YOUR DOG BASED ON HIS/HER SPECIFIC NUTRITIONAL NEEDS.

SENIOR DOGS (7 YRS AND OLDER):

- BASED ON YOUR DOG'S NUTRITIONAL NEEDS, FEED THE APPROPRIATE HIGH QUALITY SENIOR FORMULA.
- SENIOR DIETS ARE FORMULATED TO ADDRESS THE SPECIFIC NEEDS OF YOUR OLDER DOG; THEY ARE LOWER IN FAT, SALT, AND PHOSPHORUS, AND HIGHER IN FIBER TO INCREASE DIGESTIBILITY.
- ADJUST THE AMOUNT OF FEEDING TO MAINTAIN AS CLOSE TO A BCS 3 AS POSSIBLE.

IS IT OK TO GIVE MY DOG BONES TO CHEW ON?

MANY DOGS, ESPECIALLY YOUNG DOGS, HAVE A NATURAL INSTINCT TO CHEW. HOWEVER, YOU SHOULD ONLY GIVE BONES AND CHEW TOYS THAT ARE SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED FOR DOGS TO SAFELY CHEW SUCH AS NYLABONES AND KONG TOYS. BONES, ESPECIALLY CHICKEN AND TURKEY BONES, CAN SPLINTER AND CAUSE SERIOUS PROBLEMS SUCH AS GETTING LODGED IN YOUR DOG'S MOUTH, CONSTIPATION, OR EVEN BLOODY DIARRHEA. ROUND BONES CAN GET STUCK AROUND THE LOWER JAW OR LODGED IN THE ESOPHAGUS AS WELL AS FRACTURE TEETH.

WHAT ABOUT RAWHIDE BONES?

RAWHIDE IS THE INNER LAYER OF THE HIDE OF USUALLY A COW. RAWHIDE CAN GIVE DOGS AND PUPPIES THE ABILITY TO CHEW AN ACCEPTABLE TOY WHILE BENEFITING FROM THE MECHANICAL ACTION OF CHEWING. HOWEVER, THERE ARE SOME PRECAUTIONS YOU SHOULD KEEP IN MIND IF YOU CHOOSE TO GIVE YOUR DOG RAWHIDES. FIRST OF ALL, IF YOUR DOG HAS A

HISTORY OF VOMITING, DIARRHEA, SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS, OR ALLERGIES, HE/SHE MAY HAVE A BAD REACTION TO RAWHIDE. IN ADDITION, IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT THAT THE RAWHIDE BE LARGE ENOUGH THAT YOUR DOG CANNOT SWALLOW IT WHOLE. LARGE PIECES CAN POTENTIALLY GET STUCK IN THE ESOPHAGUS OR GASTROINTESTINAL TRACT AND REQUIRE SURGICAL REMOVAL. THEREFORE, WHEN THE RAWHIDE GETS SMALL ENOUGH THAT IT CAN BE SWALLOWED, YOU SHOULD TAKE IT AWAY FROM YOUR DOG. ALSO, THE “KNOTS” ON THE ENDS OF SOME RAWHIDE BONES CAN BE SWALLOWED WHOLE AND LEAD TO A GASTROINTESTINAL OBSTRUCTION. IT IS THEREFORE RECOMMENDED TO AVOID GIVING THIS TYPE OF RAWHIDE BONE TO YOUR DOG. AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST, IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT THERE ARE CALORIES IN RAWHIDE. THESE CALORIES CAN ADD UP; THUS, MODERATION IS THE KEY.

WHAT KIND OF TREATS CAN I GIVE MY DOG?

OBESITY IS THE NUMBER ONE NUTRITIONAL HEALTH PROBLEM IN DOGS AND PEOPLE. JUST AS IN PEOPLE, OBESITY CAN LEAD TO SERIOUS HEALTH PROBLEMS SUCH AS DIABETES, PANCREATITIS, HEART DISEASE, AND ARTHRITIS. DOG BISCUITS AND TREATS ARE GENERALLY VERY HIGH IN FAT; THEREFORE, MODERATION IS IMPORTANT. IF YOU ARE USING TREATS FOR TRAINING, BREAK UP THE TREAT INTO SMALLER MORSELS INSTEAD OF GIVING YOUR DOG THE ENTIRE TREAT AS A REWARD. ALTERNATIVELY, VEGETABLES (NO ONIONS, GARLIC, OR AVOCADO), COOKED EGG WHITES, OR AIR POPPED POPCORN ARE SOME LOW FAT OPTIONS FOR TREATS. JUST REMEMBER TO KEEP IN MIND HOW MUCH YOUR DOG IS EATING IN ADDITION TO HIS/HER BALANCED DIET. A SMALL 10 LB DOG THAT GAINS 1 LB DUE TO AN OVERABUNDANCE OF TREATS IS LIKE A PERSON PUTTING ON 15 LBS.

WHAT ABOUT TABLE SCRAPS?

FEEDING YOUR DOG TABLE SCRAPS IS NOT RECOMMENDED FOR SEVERAL REASONS. FIRST, TABLE FOOD IS GENERALLY TOO FATTY FOR THE DIGESTIVE SYSTEM OF MOST ANIMALS AND CAN CAUSE STOMACH UPSET AS WELL AS OCCASIONALLY TRIGGER PANCREATITIS (WHICH CAN BE A LIFE-THREATENING INFLAMMATION OF THE PANCREAS). SOME FOODS CAN EVEN BE TOXIC TO YOUR DOG! SECOND, FEEDING YOUR DOG TABLE SCRAPS IN ADDITION TO HIS/HER REGULAR BALANCED DIET ADDS CALORIES AND MAY LEAD TO OBESITY. IN ADDITION, IF YOUR DOG FILLS UP ON TABLE SCRAPS, HE/SHE MAY POTENTIALLY EAT LESS OF HER/HIS REGULAR DOG FOOD AND THUS, YOUR DOG WILL NOT BE GETTING PROPER NUTRITION. THIS CAN ALSO LEAD TO A VERY FINICKY EATER WHICH NOT ONLY CAN BE EXTREMELY FRUSTRATING FOR YOU, BUT UNHEALTHY FOR YOUR DOG BECAUSE IT WILL BECOME VERY DIFFICULT TO ENSURE THAT YOUR DOG GETS A COMPLETE AND BALANCED DIET. IF YOU WISH TO COOK FOR YOUR DOG, THERE ARE CERTAIN RECIPES FORMULATED TO MEET THE SPECIFIC NUTRITIONAL NEEDS OF YOUR DOG. ASK US FOR THE RECIPE THAT IS RIGHT FOR YOUR DOG IF YOU CHOOSE TO DO THE COOKING.

WILL MY PET BE BORED EATING THE SAME FOOD ALL OF THE TIME?

BOREDOM WITH FOOD IS A HUMAN TRAIT. DOGS TEND TO BE CREATURES OF HABIT AND ARE USUALLY HAPPY WITH ONE FOOD. IF YOU ABRUPTLY OR CONSTANTLY CHANGE YOUR DOG’S DIET, THIS CAN LEAD TO VOMITING AND DIARRHEA PROBLEMS AND MAY TURN YOUR DOG INTO A FINICKY EATER.

DO I NEED TO GIVE MY DOG VITAMINS OR SUPPLEMENTS?

IF YOUR DOG IS EATING A HIGH QUALITY DOG FOOD THAT IS 100% COMPLETE AND BALANCED, THERE IS NO NEED TO GIVE YOUR DOG VITAMINS OR SUPPLEMENTS.