

# EATING HEALTHY!

Dogs need a balanced diet just like people. A good diet for your dog balances energy, protein, fat, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals. The amount and type of food that your dog needs is based on many factors:

Factor	Example	Description
Age	puppy, adult, senior	Dogs between one and seven years old are most at risk for obesity. Proper nutrition and exercise is important.
Breed	Chihuahua vs. Great Dane	Some breeds have a greater risk of obesity or medical conditions that can be managed with proper nutrition.
Neuter Status	neutered or intact male/female	Obesity is more frequently a problem in neutered dogs.
Body Condition	underweight, healthy weight, overweight, obese	Body condition is one factor used to determine health status and therefore portion size.
Lifestyle	kenneled, lap dog, working dog, athlete, breeding dog	Active dogs such as working dogs and athletes need more energy than dogs that like to sleep on the sofa all day.
Environment	indoor vs. outdoor, climate	More energy is required if dogs live outdoors in cold climates. More water but not as much energy is needed if dogs live in hot environments.
Medical Conditions	diabetes, kidney problems	Medical conditions can require a special diet. Prescription pet foods are available in some cases.

## Team Up!

Your veterinarian can help with:

- Selecting a healthy feeding and exercise strategy for your dog
- Ensuring that your dog has no medical conditions that would restrict diet or exercise

## Know Your Doggie's Diet

Here are a few questions that your veterinarian might ask before recommending the best nutrition plan:

- Who feeds your dog?
- What kind of dog food do you feed? Commercial (brand) or homemade (bring recipes)? Dry or moist?
- How often and what kinds of treats, snacks, vitamins, or other supplements do you give your dog?
- How often does your dog get table food?
- Do you feed your dog set meals? If yes, how much food is in each meal?
- Do you measure the amount of food given? If yes, what do you use?
- Does your dog have access to food all day? Can your dog access the food of other animals?
- Does your dog have access to other food sources? Is your dog unsupervised outdoors?
- Have there been any changes recently? Types of food? Eating more or less food? Becoming a picky eater? Stress and medical conditions can sometimes affect your dog's eating habits.



References and Resources:

Hand et al (Eds).(2000). Small Animal Clinical Nutrition. Topeka, KS: Mark Morris Institute

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