



FOOD ALLERGIES

Symptoms

- Itchy Skin that doesn't respond to steroids
- Recurrent Ear Infections
- Recurrent Yeast Infections
- Year-round symptoms
- Digestive problems, including excessive (more than 2/day) bowel movements

Product Suggestions

- Glacier Peak Holistics Pet Wellness Life Stress Scan
- Halshan Raw Food
- Smallbatch Pets Raw Blends
- Annamaet Enhance
- Four Leaf Rover Protect
- Four Leaf Rover Bifido for Fido
- Animal Essentials Plant Enzymes and Probiotics
- Answers Raw Goat Milk
- Four Leaf Rover Colostrum
- HomeoPet Skin and Itch Relief
- Wondercide Skin Tonic Spray
- Holistic Hound Mighty Mojo Mushroom Formula
- SquarePet VFS Skin & Digestive Support dry food
- SquarePet Square Egg

COMMON PROBLEM? ONLY ABOUT 10% OF PETS ARE EFFECTED

As our pets are exposed to an increasing amount of toxins such as poor quality diets, pesticides, herbicides, urban pollution, and over-vaccination, we are seeing an increase in all kinds of immune system problems in our pets. While we may not be able to control all of the factors, we can control our pet's diet. Unfortunately the diet may be causing some of the problems too.

"ALLERGY" OR "INTOLERANCE" OR "SENSITIVITY"?

A food allergy is an immune system response where antibodies are sent out to fight off what it perceives as a threat. Some animals have damaged intestinal systems and can easily develop new allergies because proteins pass to the blood system and cause the immune system to feel threatened (this is known as "leaky gut"). Dogs have ten times more mast cells in their skin than humans, so itching all over the body is a common way allergies show up. A food intolerance is not related to this immune system response, but can show similar symptoms, plus many more (vomiting, diarrhea, joint inflammation, aggression). The difference between the two is usually unimportant when deciding what to feed, but it is important to be aware that while food intolerances may not show up on a clinical allergy test it can cause just as many problems as a true allergy.

COULD IT BE SOMETHING ELSE?

Many issues can cause similar symptoms: intestinal parasites, yeast, flea allergies, airborne allergies, contact allergies, chemical sensitivities, histamine sensitivity, medications like Flagyl, and more. Damage to the immune system can create a host of problems. Your pet could be suffering from other problems, but a better diet is always going to improve their health, so the closer you get to fresh food the better.

HOW TO FIND OUT WHAT FOOD YOUR PET IS ALLERGIC TO

You can get skin or blood tests done by your vet, but the results aren't always conclusive, and may even give false results, so many vets no longer recommend these. Nutriscan is a saliva test available from Hemopet, but it tests for a limited number of food ingredients. We sell The Glacier Peak Holistics sensitivity test that uses a biofeedback method to ascertain food and environmental triggers; all you need to provide is saliva and hair samples and the results are emailed to you. Many vets suggest and we agree that the only true test is to eliminate the suspected ingredients for one to three months and see if symptoms subside, then reintroduce ingredients to "test" them.

HOW TO DO AN ELIMINATION DIET – FRESH IS BEST

The best way to know exactly what is going into your pet is to feed fresh food. Homemade cooked or raw diets are ideal for elimination diets. The key is being strict about limiting the variety of food. To do this diet properly you should feed only one protein and one carbohydrate, for at least one month - this includes treats! It is best to start this diet with a meat your pet hasn't had before (which is why most packaged foods designed for an elimination



Learn More

Check out these books:

- *Dr. Pitcairn's Guide to Natural Health for Dogs and Cats*
- *The Allergy Solution For Dogs*
- *The New Holistic Way for Dogs & Cats*
- *Healthy Dog Cookbook*

Related Pet Health Guides:

- **Seasonal Allergies**
- **Basic Digestive Health**
- **Home Cooked Diets**
- **Raw Food Basics**



diet use meats like venison, bison, fish, or duck). Be mindful of any supplements you are using. We recommend very specific nutritional supplements to balance the diet.

A healthy adult dog or cat can go without supplementation for the first month of an elimination diet, after which you need to introduce supplements to balance the diet, such as a multi-vitamin, oil, and calcium supplement. If your pet's condition improves, you may start to add additional foods to the diet one at a time. Do not be in a hurry to add a lot of variety to the diet; keep track of what you're feeding and how your pet's health is during these food trials. For an allergy-prone pet it's best to stick to a simple (but nutritionally balanced) diet that is working, because in the future they may develop an allergy to the food that is currently working, so you need to have new options out there to switch to. It's a good idea to write down your feeding plan as you proceed, along with tracking any medications, and write down details of your pet's health issues during the process as this will prove invaluable if your dog has a setback. You can also use natural products that help ease allergic symptoms while working through the process.

Raw Food is probably the easiest. The basics of meat, bone, and organs in proper balance provide a great deal of nutrition. A small amount of vegetable can be added to round out the nutrition and fiber (sweet potato if you want to keep it simple). Some prepared raw food diets have a limited ingredient panel, such as *Halshan*, or Smallbatch Blends, but you can easily customize a diet using specific meats and vegetables. For example, using Halshan Whole Ground Duck & adding home-cooked sweet potatoes. As with any limited ingredient diet, you need to either add supplements or begin rotating meats & other ingredients after one month to ensure proper nutrition.

Home cooked diets are a wonderful way to feed allergic pets. They can be very similar to raw food diets or can be designed with the help of some good recipes. A couple of good starch choices: sweet potatoes & quinoa are generally easy to digest and highly nutritious.

Canned foods often have ingredients that could be problematic, and feeding them exclusively could get expensive. There are a few choices that aren't too complex, though, if you need to use this format.

Dry foods are at the bottom of our list because of the high degree of processing. We do have a selection of dry foods from which to choose, depending on your pet's feeding history. We always recommend supplementing limited ingredient dry foods with extra meat because they tend to have suboptimum protein due to processing requirements.

DO YOU NEED TO DO A STRICT ELIMINATION DIET?

Maybe not. Many animals improve on a fresh food diet that is not heavily restricted. You may still want to start with a meat they don't eat regularly, a few well chosen vegetables, and if desired a well chosen grain, and see how they do before going for a super-restricted menu.

I GOT THE FOOD SETTLED, NOW WHAT?

If you've successfully completed an elimination diet and found food that works, don't rely on that food alone for improving your pet's health. Supplementing with immune-enhancing natural foods like probiotics, colostrum, herbs, and medicinal mushrooms is an important step to prevent recurring problems.