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Nutrition

How to keep your dog healthy with the right nutrition

Providing the correct nutrition for your pet is a vital aspect of maintaining its health. Significant advances have been made recently in the formulation of complete dry pet foods.

There are a confusing number of different brands available to the pet owner. These vary considerably in quality and price. We recommend Hills Science Plan Diets and Burns Diets.

The benefits of dry food include:

1. They are formulated from high quality ingredients ensuring digestibility.
2. The 90% digestibility also means very **little waste** (faeces! – 10%) compared to other more fibrous foods (average 70%).
3. The high digestibility also means that significantly less food needs to be eaten per day, consequently reducing food costs when compared to some “cheaper” foods.
4. The quality of the ingredients ensures a glossy coat, together with the development of healthy bones and teeth.
5. The availability of specific formulations for all ages of dogs and cats means that your pet gets the optimum nutrition for each life stage. Supplements are not normally required.
6. Feeding a DRY food is also convenient for you as the food does not “go off” in the bowl and helps keep your pet’s teeth clean.

While these premium foods do cost a little more, their high digestibility means that considerably less is required per day so that in cents per day they are very competitive. Bearing in mind the cost of tinned food and considerable discounts on larger bags of dry food, together with the fact that these foods are top of the range, the value of feeding these foods is evident.

How to help your pet to change to a new type of food

1. Gradually introduce any new food over a 5 – 10 day period, mixing it initially with the old food and gradually increasing the new food and phasing out the old.
2. Always ensure fresh water is available, but try not to wet the food, as it is better for the teeth if the food is fed dry. As a rule, milk is best avoided.
3. Try to get your pet into a routine with its meals, avoid diet changes and treats can occasionally be given as a reward.

If you require any advice about your pet’s nutrition, please get in touch by phone (021) 489 3033 or email contact@animalcarehospital.ie