



Nutrition Issues

Under what circumstances do you recommend giving a dog vitamins? Should vitamins be given on a regular basis or just when there is an indication that the pet may need them because of poor appetite, illness or neglect (as is the case with some rescues)?

Generally, I don't recommend vitamin supplementation unless a pet is not eating a balanced diet. Most all of the commercially available diets are balanced and have the necessary amounts of vitamins and minerals. There has not been found any harm in light supplementation, yet heavy supplementation may cause nutritional imbalances.

I have found benefit from supplementing essential fatty acids for certain skin conditions.

When does "picky eating" become a cause for concern? My pet doesn't eat much of anything some days but is active and in the normal weight range.

I don't become alarmed about the mentioned scenario. If the pet is active, alert, and doesn't show any clinical signs, such as vomiting or diarrhea, then not eating one day shouldn't be cause for alarm. I think sometimes pet owners get concerned and begin to feed table foods or frequently change the diet and create problems. Dogs do much better with a routine and any changes in diet should be done gradually.

Is it OK to give my pet a small bit of milk? Can pets be lactose intolerant?

I have seen that some dogs (and cats!) are lactose intolerant and will have diarrhea when given dairy products. You should also monitor for any increased itching as the milk proteins may cause a food allergy as well.

What does it mean when my dog eats a lot of grass and then throws it up?

Many times when dogs eat grass, they are feeling some stomach discomfort and are trying to make themselves vomit. If this is a sporadic or rare occurrence, then there's probably no need for concern. If it were a daily occurrence or obsession with eating grass, you should consult with your veterinarian.