

# FEEDING YOUR DOG





Mealtime is one of the most exciting events in your dog's day. It can also be fun for you, allowing you to provide complete nutrition to help keep your pet healthy and giving you an opportunity to bond with him. But don't let your dog get too much of a good thing — talk with your veterinarian about the right amount to feed, and be sure to measure your dog's food to help him maintain a healthy weight.



## Why puppies need special nutrition

### SWITCHING FOODS

Although you'll want to get started feeding Purina® right away, it's best to transition your dog from his current food over a 7- to 10-day period to avoid digestive upset. Simply feed a little less of the previous food each day and a little more of the new food until you're feeding Purina exclusively. This is especially important when changing from dry to canned or wet food.



Keeping your dog in ideal body condition, and providing 100 percent complete and balanced, high-quality nutrition is key to helping him live a happy, healthy life.

During his first year, your puppy needs the best possible nutrition to help build strong bones and teeth; promote proper development of body functions; strong muscles; good vision; and a thick, lustrous coat. Your puppy will do best on food that is specially formulated for growth. You can rely on Purina® puppy foods to provide the extra vitamins, minerals, nutrients and calories growing puppies need. And, you can be sure that all of our high-quality foods — from nutrition for puppies to adult dogs to senior dogs — will give your pet a healthy advantage throughout his life.

The caloric requirements of puppies gradually decrease over time and vary by breed or size. Many breeds complete growth and development in approximately one year, but certain large and giant breed puppies, such as St. Bernards, may not mature until they are nearly 2 years old. Consult your veterinarian about what type of nutrition is most appropriate for your breed of dog at any particular life stage.

# When to switch to adult dog food

The general rule is to switch your puppy to an adult dog food when he has finished growing — usually around his first birthday. However, if you have a larger breed, that could be closer to his second birthday. Ask your veterinarian when it's the right time for your dog to transition to an adult dog food.

## FEEDING YOUR ADULT DOG

Proper nutrition plays an important role in all stages of your dog's life. The adult dog has different nutritional needs from those of a growing puppy. It takes less to maintain an adult body than it does a growing body.

## WHEN YOUR DOG HAS SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS

Maintaining your dog's good health is a big responsibility, one that's best shared with your veterinarian. At your dog's next regularly scheduled checkup, let your veterinarian know of any physical or behavioral changes in your pet. If your veterinarian discovers that your dog has a special condition, he or she may recommend a therapeutic food from the Purina Veterinary Diets® line. Purina Veterinary Diets uses the power of nutrition to help in the dietary management of dogs and cats with certain health conditions. All Purina Veterinary Diets formulas are based on quality nutrition and a deep commitment to continuous improvement.

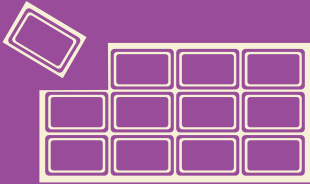
## STAYING HEALTHY ON THE INSIDE

Sometimes a diet change, stress or other factors can cause your dog to experience soft stools or diarrhea. Talk with your veterinarian to see if a probiotic such as Purina Veterinary Diets® FortiFlora® Canine Nutritional Supplement is right for your pet. FortiFlora contains a probiotic that promotes normal intestinal microflora balance and can help get the GI system back on track. Easily sprinkled on food, it can be fed to puppies and adult dogs.

# Where, when and how to feed

## WHAT NOT TO FEED YOUR DOG

- Bones
- Table scraps or any people food
- Chocolate (toxic to dogs)



Check your dog's food package for the recommended amounts for various ages and weights. It's important to know that these recommendations are only guidelines, and the right amount of food will vary with the needs of your individual pet. Ask your veterinarian for guidance on feeding and giving treats so your dog does not become overweight.

For puppies 6 to 8 weeks of age, schedule three feedings a day. Establishing a feeding schedule, along with the proper diet, is important in houstraining your puppy. You may want to moisten your puppy's food with water at first. This makes it easier for puppies, especially smaller breeds. As your puppy gets older, you can gradually reduce the water mixed with his dry food, or you can continue to feed it moistened. Switch to two feedings per day around three to four months of age.

# Consistency is key

Unlike people, dogs do not need variety in their diets; they need consistency in the form of 100 percent complete and balanced nutrition. Talk to your veterinarian about when your puppy is ready for adult dog food. Make a choice and stick with it. Changing food frequently can cause intestinal upset and can lead to finicky eating.

## HELP EXTEND YOUR DOG'S HEALTHY YEARS

A groundbreaking, 14-year lifespan study by Purina\*, showed that feeding dogs to an ideal body condition\*\* throughout their lives can help extend their healthy years – by 1.8 years for the dogs in the study. And although the dogs in the study generally developed the same chronic conditions as they aged, the need for treatment for these conditions was delayed in the lean-fed dogs.

The Purina Life Span Study\* reveals the crucial role that maintaining ideal body condition plays in health and longevity. But overweight adult dogs can still benefit from losing weight. Another Purina-sponsored study conducted at Texas A&M University showed that when overweight dogs returned to optimal weight and body condition, they were able to move more quickly and exert greater force on legs affected by osteoarthritis.\*\*\* Once again, research has proven that ideal body condition promotes better health in dogs.

\* Kealy RD, Lawler DF, et. al. Effects of diet restriction on life span and age-related changes in dogs. JAVMA 2002; 220(9):1315–1320.

\*\* Lean or ideal body condition refers to the evaluation of body physique in pets as an indicator of their overall health and well-being, generally falling into three categories: too heavy, ideal and too thin.

\*\*\* Burkholder, William J.; Taylor, Lathrop; Hulse, Donald A. Weight loss to optimal body condition increases ground reactive force in dogs with osteoarthritis. [Published in Compendium 2001;23(9A):74] College of Veterinary Medicine, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX, USA.

## WATER

Make fresh water available to your dog at all times, and clean his food and water dishes daily. Place them away from foot traffic and noise, in a place that is comfortable and easy for him to reach. Do not change the location of the dishes unless it is absolutely necessary. Do not allow people to disturb or startle your dog while he eats.



## HIGH STANDARDS

All Purina® foods are formulated to meet or exceed the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) standards for feeding dogs and cats.



We are passionately committed to creating a better world for pets and their owners. As partners in your pet's care, we'd like to hear from you.



Visit us: [Purina.com](http://Purina.com)

Call us: 1-866-PURINA1 (1-866-787-4621)  
Monday - Friday, 7am - 7pm, CT.

# What's in a label?

Pet food labels provide information to help you make a good food selection for your dog.

## GUARANTEED ANALYSIS

The label provides a guaranteed analysis that states the minimum levels of protein and fat, maximum levels of fiber and moisture, and any additional guaranteed nutrients the manufacturer provides.

## INGREDIENTS

The label also shows all ingredients used to make the pet food, listed in descending order of their predominance by weight.

## LIFE STAGES

The label should indicate whether the product provides complete and balanced nutrition for all life stages (including growth, gestation/lactation and adult maintenance) or for a particular life stage, such as adult maintenance.

## FEEDING STUDIES

The label should show if the product has undergone animal feeding studies. If you have questions about your puppy's food that are not answered on the label, check with your veterinarian or contact the manufacturer.