

## Next Steps for Your Pet's Nutrition

### Lesson Summary

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Congratulations on making it to the last lesson! Hopefully, by now, you've seen how important nutrition is to the health of your pet and how woefully inadequate store-bought food can be. The challenge of this lesson is to try your hand at preparing food at home to see if it's the right solution for you. You'll be equipped with the recipes you need to please your pet's appetite while helping him or her to thrive.

### Lesson Objectives

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After completing this lesson, you should be able to:

- Calculate your pet's nutritional needs
- Create a meal and supplement plan for your pet
- Identify items you need to purchase from a whole foods store
- Begin preparing your pet's food from home using provided recipe

### Lesson Roadmap

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1. Watch the lesson **video** and fill in the note-taking guide below.
2. **Read about it.** Carefully read the suggested resource:
  - a. *The Ultimate Pet Health Guide*, Chapter 5 – **Guide to Creating a Balanced Diet for Your Pet**
  - b. *The Ultimate Pet Health Guide*, Appendix C: **Home-Prepared Diets for Dogs and Cats**
3. **Think about it.** Take several minutes to reflect on the following questions:
  - a. What are the advantages of preparing your pet's food at home? What positive effects might you see in your pet's health by providing food prepared at home?
  - b. What is keeping you from preparing food for your pet at home?
4. **Take action steps** to help your pet thrive.
  - a. Using the resources provided, calculate the nutritional needs of your pet.
  - b. Ask your veterinarian for advice on a nutritional supplement plan for your pet.
  - c. Create a meal and supplement plan for your pet.

- d. Write a shopping list and purchase the items you need to make food for your pet at home for one week.
  - e. Download and complete the **Pet Care Checklist**.
  - f. Download and review the **Daily Calorie Calculator**.
  - g. Jot down your reactions to this lesson and your action steps to improve your pet's health in the space provided below.
5. Take the lesson **quiz**.
  6. Take the final exam to receive your digital "Ultimate Pet Parent" badge.

## Video Notes

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It might seem easier to pour your pet some food from a bag or spoon it out of a can, but is that really the best option? In this video, you'll discover how to make nutritious food for your pet at home, starting with calculating your pet's precise nutritional needs. You'll be amazed by how simple it is to prepare nutritious food for your pet once you get the hang of it!

### The Pros and Cons of Buying Pet Food vs. Making It

Buying a fresh whole food diet

- Already nutritionally \_\_\_\_\_
- Food \_\_\_\_\_ issues already addressed
- Convenient
- Convenience comes at a \_\_\_\_\_

Making your own pet food

- Complete \_\_\_\_\_
- Quality control is more difficult, which could lead to gastrointestinal issues in your pet
- You need to add your own \_\_\_\_\_ and supplements
- You must work off an appropriately balanced \_\_\_\_\_. You can't just wing it!
- Less \_\_\_\_\_

### The Basics of Making Food

- Read and purchase the list of ingredients (e.g., meat, vegetables, fruit, grains, etc., vitamin and mineral supplements)
- \_\_\_\_\_ the food (cook, chop, cool, etc., per recipe)
- Add in the proper amount of vitamins (crushed)
- Divide it into \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ individual portions

- Make as much as you can at one time

If your pet has a specific medical issue that requires him to be on a therapeutic diet, it would be best to \_\_\_\_\_ food rather than \_\_\_\_\_ it.

### **How Much Should I Feed My Pet?**

- Start with the amount recommended on the \_\_\_\_\_ of food you buy.
- Nothing is written in stone; it's whatever's right for your individual pet.
- If desired, calculate the DER (daily \_\_\_\_\_ requirement). Otherwise follow feeding instructions for the recipe you are using.
- A \_\_\_\_\_ will give you some guidance if you're making your own food.
- If your pet is losing weight, feed her more; if she's gaining, feed her less.

Losing weight when feeding most whole, fresh food diets is very common because of the fewer \_\_\_\_\_ in the diet.

Use your common sense. Start with what seems right and see how they \_\_\_\_\_ to it.

Always change your pet's diet \_\_\_\_\_.

- Take away 25% of their current food and replace it with the same amount of new food.
- Over the next week or week and a half, slowly add in more new foods and take away the old food.
- Keep an eye out for signs of tummy \_\_\_\_\_ indicating you're transitioning too \_\_\_\_\_
  - Vomiting
  - Diarrhea
  - Gurgly tummy

## **Reactions and Action Steps**

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What did you learn in this lesson that was new to you or that you found intriguing? Based on what you learned, list any action steps you plan to take. What can you do right now to improve your pet's health? What can you do in the future? What are the major obstacles to taking your action steps, and how will you overcome them?