This book is an informative work only and should not be taken as medical advice for your pet. Seek the advice of a qualified veterinarian before proceeding with any activity regarding the health and well-being of your pet. Remember: dogs are people too!
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What Are The Benefits Of Hypoallergenic Dog Food?

In the last few years several dog food companies have developed hypoallergenic dog foods. Often dog owners are confused about these products and do not truly understand why they have been developed and when to consider them for their dog and what the benefits might be.

The easiest way to think about hypoallergenic dog food is that these foods contain ingredients that are better suited to a dog’s natural digestive system and they are designed to address a food allergy.

A dog’s digestive system is designed to break down raw proteins and some vegetable matter however the ingredients in many dry and some wet dog foods in the United States are largely made up of corn, wheat, dairy, soy and other grains. This can cause the dog’s own digestive system to work against properly breaking down the food. The result can be an allergy to one or more of the ingredients which can cause health problems; such as itchy skin, hot spots, hair loss, upset stomach, as well as episodes of diarrhea and vomiting.

The ingredients in hypoallergenic dog food are designed to work with a dog’s natural digestive system. The ingredients usually vary from what is included in the average dog food available in the United States. For instance the protein sources in hypoallergenic dog foods are usually venison meat, duck, rabbit and salmon instead of chicken, lamb or pork. Brown rice is often used instead of corn, wheat, dairy or soy.

Something to keep in mind; the terms organic, natural and hypoallergenic all have very different meanings when you are discussing dog food. A product can be sold as natural and not be organic, or vice verse and hypoallergenic is really about a type of diet rather than being organic or natural.

The best hypoallergenic dog food will be made from organic ingredients and those ingredients will be natural, and not artificial or artificially preserved. But the point of the hypoallergenic food diet is to address an allergy to one or more of the food ingredients the dog is currently consuming in his or her daily food.

Always remember that the health problems listed above can also have other sources, such as flea and or tick bites as well as other parasites. So be sure to have your dog thoroughly checked out by a Veterinary and by all means discuss your dog’s current diet with your Veterinary and seek his or her opinion. In so doing you could save money on future costly Vet visits and improve your best friend’s quality and quantity of life.
Some Truths Related to Holistic Pet Food

Many people enjoy the company of a pet in their home, be it a dog or cat, young and old both love having one around. Although keeping them in a safe place is done by almost everyone, some people forget the fact that all pets need a healthy intake of nutritious food on a day-to-day basis. Unfortunately pet stores don’t always provide the best type of pet food your dog or cat needs. Holistic pet food is considered to be the best in the range of pet food due to many reasons, some of which will be stated below.

The kind of holistic pet food purchased is important as some people are misled into buying the wrong type. Some brands of holistic pet food contain ingredients that are harmful to the pets’ body. For instance, some can have artificial additives, flavors and also may contain sugar, all harmful to the pet causing them to have allergies (and worse) later on.

The increase in holistic pet food being sold all around the country is one of the main reasons why the pet food industry is doing well. Unfortunately, there are manufacturers who do not comply with the proper health needs of your pet and sell products that are of low quality.

Holistic pet food that has organic ingredients, certified by the USDA, and these foods are generally known to be healthier. Cheap and unhealthy conventional types of pet food can have hormones, toxic pesticide, antibiotics and genetically modified organisms that are shown to have allergic effects on pets. Studies show that pets who have been given these type of food for a long term tend to end up with health problems.

Holistic pet food has all the vitamins and minerals that your pet needs. Keep in mind that there are some types of holistic pet food that use high temperature process. Some of these include cooking and baking. These methods destroy the nutritional value in the food. Holistic pet food made out of human-grade ingredients is the best, so look for those that do not use such heating methods.

Holistic pet food comes in different varieties packed to suit different pets. There are chicken, duck, oat, and other meal options in holistic pet foods. Most good types of holistic pet food contain minerals, vitamins and anti oxidants and is adequate for one serving per day. When there are retailers selling pet food from all categories, it can be difficult to purchase the right product. Simply look out for the USDA certification as this certifies the holistic pet food to be of the highest quality.
Your Pet's Nutritional Requirements

Any responsible pet owner should understand that their pet’s nutritional needs vary from their own dietary requirements. Humans have a wide and varied diet where as an animal is much more likely to eat just a restricted range of foods.

Most animals tend to be either carnivores or herbivores. Humans are classed as omnivores and only a small number of animals fall into this category. Our pets will often have a similar feeding regime to us, by eating at particular meal times, rather than having a need to graze. By eating meals in this manner the animal is highlighting that it is capable of consuming bulk amounts of food at specific times of the day.

We all lead busy lives and this can lead to us neglecting our pets diet. However, to be a responsible pet owner you really should place great importance on what you are feeding to your pet. Vitamins are crucial to any animal, and the majority receive all their vitamins from food.

Therefore, quality pet food is of paramount importance and our pets are totally dependent on us to supply the correct vitamins and minerals through their food. Commercial pet food is perhaps the best way to feed your pet and by feeding a quality, vet approved product you can be sure that each bowl full is healthy and nutritious.

Visit any quality pet food retailer and you will be faced with a great choice of food for your animal. From dry food, to wet, biscuits to bones you really can feed your pet a lovely variety of healthy and tasty meals. Just go easy on the snacks of you want to avoid weight gain. Quality branded pet food is now very good and more often than not is scientifically supported. Just make sure you are buying a good product and shop with a vet approved pet retailer rather than a supermarket as you are likely to find a more premium product.

If we ensure that our animals are receiving the best ingredients, minerals and vitamins in either tinned, dried or fresh form then we need look no further and know that we can provide a happy and healthy lifestyle for them. You may not have considered buying a premium, vet approved pet food before because of the perceived high cost. However, you need to feed much less of a premium product because it is packed full of essential ingredients and not bulked out with crumbs and grains. This means that the cost per bowl of food often ends up less than some of the supermarket brands and you are feeding a better product.

A responsible pet owner will want their pet to be healthy and happy and by understanding pet nutrition you are more than likely to achieve this. Remember that your pet’s health is in your hands, so it is your responsibility to provide good quality food at each meal time.
Ask For Help When Seeking Hypoallergenic Dog Foods

Ask for help when looking for hypoallergenic dog food. Some people believe they are on their own when they try to find a hypoallergenic dog food for their dog. Especially when they believe their dog has a food allergy.

Your first stop should be your veterinarian in order to determine that your dog does actually have a food allergy. He may be suffering from an allergy that is not related to his food but rather is related to his environment. Just as with humans dogs can be allergic to carpeting, material in their sleeping area or in their dog bed, a substance that is present in their immediate living space such as a cleaning chemical or a shampoo that you are using or even drinking water and the chemicals contained in it can be a source of irritation.

Once you have determined that food is the problem, you have several resources to go to for more information. Again your vet should be your first source. Ask lots of questions in particular what ingredients are used any any food that is being recommended and how the food is made. Often, the high heat used in making dry dog food causes the release of chemicals which can cause irritation to your dog.

Next I would suggest you seek out a small specialty pet food or supply store in your area. I am not saying that the larger chain stores are not also a resource but a smaller store will have more time to devote to you in helping you learn about what hypoallergenic dog foods they offer and what the pros and cons of each food are.

Smaller holistic pet food stores have really taken off in the last few years and even a store like Whole Foods Market is now offering a wide variety of natural and hypoallergenic dog foods. Also these smaller stores will often have in store events with Experts such as pet nutritionists and Veterinarians that specialize in holistic treatments for dogs.

So ask for help when shopping for a hypoallergenic dog food and investigate your local area for smaller specialty stores that have the time and knowledge to help you make an informed decision.
**Best Dry Dog Foods – Hypoallergenic Choices**

The best dry dog foods are found when looking at the hypoallergenic choices that are available. As many pet owners have discovered, hypoallergenic dog food is much better for your dog than other types of pet food. This type of food is designed to work better with your dog’s digestive system and to make him healthier than he would be on a diet consisting of more mainstream food choices.

There are a lot of choices out there when deciding what type of hypoallergenic food you believe would be best for your dog. The best way to decide is to do research your choices and make your decision based on your dog’s own health issues.

If your dog has food allergies of any kind, there are a variety of hypoallergenic foods out there which address these problems. The best dry dog foods are the ones that will work with your dog’s system.

Many hypoallergenic foods are made with rice as opposed to any harsher grain products. If your dog has an allergy to rice, options are available that substitute potatoes for the rice. If certain types of meats give your dog problems, there are hypoallergenic choices that are made from all types of meat. Simply choose the food that does not contain the meat your dog is allergic to.

Your pet can also develop skin allergies or other skin irritations due to any number of chemicals or preservatives that are in many types of dog food. This can easily be helped by switching to hypoallergenic dog food.

These foods do not contain these types of chemicals and are some of the best dry dog food options around because of it.

A skin irritation can cause your pet a lot of pain and anxiety, as well as being unhealthy in general. The best way to avoid this problem is to eliminate foreign chemicals from his diet. The best dry dog foods for your pet are the ones that ensure his health and happiness.

There are many options out there, and you must pick the one that works best for your dog. Hypoallergenic dog food can be found through a variety of companies which maintain a variety of ingredient options. You must always choose the brand and food that works best with your dog’s own digestive system. Try a variety of options until you find the one that is right for you and your pet.
What are the best dog foods and the worst dog foods?

Science Diet, Iams, Pedigree, Purina, and the like are “junk food” – literally. They’re all chalk full of by-products, fillers, and chemical preservatives. It’s the equivalency of always feeding your human child McDonald’s food. If you don’t believe me, read *The Science Diet Scam* by Mordanna.

You’ll also finds more good information at [The Dog Food Project](#).

There are a lot of excellent holistic food out there, including:

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among many others.
Vegetarian Dog Food

If your dog suffers from allergies due to the commercial pet food they eat, you may want to consider trying vegetarian dog food. Just like humans, dogs can survive without meat because they are mostly omnivorous, meaning that both animals and plants are primary food sources.

One of the most important aspects in switching your dog to a vegetarian diet is to incorporate the vegetarian dog food little by little. Mixing small of the vegetarian dog food into the dog food you normally serve is a great way to get started.

For example, start by mixing 3/4 the amount dog food you use now with 1/4 the amount of the new vegetarian dog food you want to switch to. Once your dog has become accustomed to their new food without any problems, continue this by making their meals half vegetarian dog food and half the dog food that you normally use. Continue further by using 3/4 the amount of vegetarian dog food with 1/4 the amount of the dog food you normally use. Eventually, your normal dog food will become vegetarian dog food! The key to successfully switching to vegetarian dog food is to make it a gradual process.

If you are considering making your own vegetarian dog food, many vegetarian dog food recipe books and websites are available. Whether you are making your own vegetarian dog food from scratch or are going to add vegetables to your current dog food, make sure that the vegetables are chopped up and granulated enough. Some fibrous vegetables may be hard for dogs to digest just by their chewing so mixing vegetables in a food processor until they are finely chopped is a great way to make digestion a little easier.

Dogs, just like humans, on vegetarian diets can lack certain nutrients normally found in meat. To combat this, consider adding supplements to your dog’s vegetarian food. Consult your veterinarian before adding supplements to your dog’s food and before switching them to vegetarian dog food. Also, many vegetarian dog foods make up for the lost nutrients found in meat by adding soy. If your dog is allergic to soy, carefully read dog food labels to make sure there is no soy or any other ingredients they may be allergic to.

Switching to a new food regimen, whether its vegetarian dog food or just a new brand, is a gradual process. Give your dog time to adjust to the new food and keep an eye out for any negative side effects the new food could have on your dog. As always, talk to your veterinarian when wanting to switch to vegetarian dog food to find the right plan that works best for your pet!
**Bonus: Testing for Dog Skin Allergies Using Hypoallergenic Foods**

In a post from Cesar Millan’s website, [ceasraway.com](http://ceasraway.com), his contributing veterinarian says:

“To diagnose a food allergy, you feed a hypoallergenic food exclusively for 6-10 weeks. If the itch goes away, it is a food allergy. If not, there is likely another allergy (unless there is still some infection present). One of the most common reasons for food trials to fail is 'It was just a little cookie' or 'Fluffy has to have her rawhide'. For a food trial to be successful, you must be strong. (Fluffy will thank you). Even the tiniest amount of allergy-causing food can start the whole itch all over again. At the end of the 6 to 10 weeks, if you were perfect and there is no improvement, it is unlikely to be a food allergy, and you can go back to normal food while you get inhalant allergy testing done.”