

CANCER DIET ADVICE

There have been some changes in the recommendations about the best diet for dogs with cancer. It used to be that the only advice available was to encourage these dogs to eat as much as possible because it was known that dogs with cancer lost weight even though eating normally. Until recently, this phenomenon was not understood, but research has shown that cancer cells thrive on carbohydrates as an energy source, rather than on fats or proteins. The chemical reaction of the breakdown of those carbohydrates causes dogs with cancer to burn calories at a faster pace, so that they lose weight even while eating the same amount they always did. This means that the newest recommendation is for dogs with cancer to have diets low in carbohydrates, high in protein and high in fat. Dogs with cancer who were fed in this way lost less weight and even may have lived longer as a result.

On a low carbohydrate diet, cancer cells will next turn to protein as an energy source. If the cancer is a fast-growing kind, it can use up all the protein in the dog's diet and then turn to the dog's own muscle protein. In order to minimize this risk, the dog's diet needs a high protein level. The dietary fat should be especially high since the body can use it as an energy source but cancer cells cannot. In fact, cancer diets should include additional Omega-3 fatty acids which actually seem to inhibit tumor growth.

If you can spare the time, you will be doing your dog a great favor to prepare him a special diet while he is fighting the cancer. This formula is not suggested for long term use on a healthy animal, but will help sustain a dog who is suffering from cancer. A simple rule of thumb for the cancer diet is to have one half poultry or fish and one half mixed vegetables, either fresh or frozen. These can be cooked together, frozen in portions

and served with some olive, safflower or cod fish oil and a high quality vitamin/mineral supplement. Calcium is also beneficial and can come from dry milk powder, cottage or ricotta cheese, yogurt or whole milk.