

## FEEDING YOUR PET

Client Information Series

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Everyone has an opinion about feeding your pet from what kind of food, how many meals per day, treats or no treats, or people-food. You can get information from breeders, family, friends, and pet food sales personnel. Unlike your other sources of information, we, the doctors and staff of Cedar Grove Veterinary Services, can provide you with nutritional counseling that will meet the health needs of your pet for their entire lifetime.

Let's start by discussing what type of food to feed your new companion...

First, you want to select a high quality food. The phrase "you get what you pay for" applies just as easily to pet foods as anything else in life. Cheap foods can lead to long-term health problems of the skin, ears, gastrointestinal tract, and poor bone and muscle development. We routinely recommend certain brands of foods because in the clinic we know both good health and bad health and see a correlation with certain types of diet.

Second, you want to select an age appropriate food. Growing animals have a higher energy need than mature animals, and likewise pets in their senior years generally have lower energy requirements than adults. By feeding the right type of food and calories per day, your pet will be less likely to suffer from obesity during their lifetime.

Third, some pets will suffer from health conditions that will require special food. Whether the problem is as simple as soft stool or dry skin, or more complex diseases such as liver or kidney disease, the doctors and staff at the clinic are well trained to help you select the best food to treat the problem.

The next step is to determine how you want to feed your pet. You can either feed free-choice or regular measured meals. By far, the easiest way to feed your pet is to provide a "full bowl" of kibble every day. **However**, the vast majority of pets do not eat only what they need but rather overeat and become obese. The best way is to only feed a measured amount of food each day taking in consideration the amount of "extras" that your pet receives daily. We recommend dividing the daily portion into 2-3 meals per day. Providing your pet with daily meals allows you to monitor for changes in appetite and alert you to a sick pet sooner for prompt veterinary care. The other benefit to feeding a meal is when you have multiple pets that may need different diets due to age or health concerns; you are then able to feed more precisely what each of your pets need.

Please contact us for any of your "diet" questions. We are happy to talk with you.

*"Caring for your pets...as if they were our own"*