

Ten Tips On... Feeding Your Pet!



Recent research is clearly demonstrating that obesity and all its associated health risks is becoming a major health issue for domestic dogs and cats. The answer is simple – diet and exercise.

1. Pets come in all shapes and sizes and the amount of food and type of food that they need varies by breed, age, size and activity level, fortunately there are a number of readily available resources that you can access from your veterinarian, your breeder and the major pet food manufacturers.
2. The amount of food recommended by pet food manufacturers is carefully calculated to meet the needs of the average pet – in order to keep your pet at a healthy weight, don't guess, measure the food out and follow the guidelines.
3. Your pet's health will benefit in the long run if you refrain from feeding your pet kitchen scraps – human food is best kept for humans.
4. Cats require a significantly higher percentage of protein than dogs – do not substitute dog food for cat food and vice-versa.
5. Even if you're a vegetarian, your cat or dog shouldn't be. Cats are strict carnivores and they require certain nutrients only found in animal sources. Dogs are more omnivorous in nature but also require some animal source nutrients for good health.
6. Make sure that your pet has constant access to fresh water, especially if you are feeding your pet a dry food.
7. Pet's can become obese without experiencing significant weight gain, a couple of pounds is all it takes to tip the scales for a cat. If you are worried about your pet's weight ask your veterinarian to assess your pet's body condition and to make recommendations with regards to the type of food that your pet should be eating. A weight management formulated food may not be sufficient; there may be an underlying health issue that requires a prescription diet.
8. If you want to give your pets treats to reward them for good behavior, remember that the calorific content of manufactured treats can be high and is in addition to your pet's regular food allowance. If you give your pets treats on a regular basis, you may have to reduce the amount of food that you give them at mealtimes to make sure that they don't stray too far from their daily dietary needs.
9. If your veterinarian recommends that you switch your pet's food, do it slowly. Mix it half and half with their old food and watch your pet for any signs of digestive distress. As your pet becomes used to the new food, gradually reduce the proportion of their old food until it reaches zero.
10. Remember, your pet relies on you for their health and welfare, feed them a healthy balanced diet now and they'll thank you later.

Always consult a licensed veterinarian before adjusting your pets diet.